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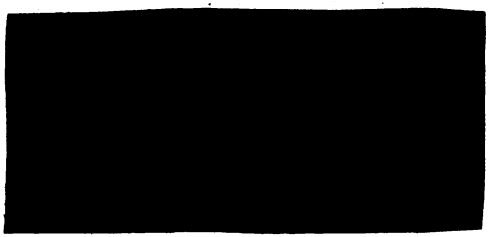

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LETTERS
OF
ABELARD
AND
HELOISE.

To which is prefix'd, a

PARTICULAR ACCOUNT

OF THEIR

LIVES, AMOURS,

AND

MISFORTUNES,

Extracted chiefly from Monsieur *BAYLE.*

Translated from the *French.*

LONDON:
Printed for *J. Watts*; and Sold by *W. Lewis* in *Russel-street, Covent-Garden. J. Brown* at the *Black Swan* without *Temple-Bar, B. Lintott* between the *Two Temple-Gates*, and *J. Pemberton* at the *Buck* in *Fleet-street, W. Taylor* at the *Ship* in *Pater-noster-row, N. Cliff* and *D. Jackson* in *Cheapside, R. Smith* and *R. Parker* under the *Royal Exchange.* MDCCXIII.

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PREFACE.

IT is very surprizing that the Letters of Abelard *and* Heloise *have not sooner appear'd in* English, *since it is generally allow'd by all who have seen them in other Languages, that they are written with the greatest Passion of any in this kind which are Extant. And it is certain that the* Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier, *which have so long been known and admired among us, are in all Respects inferior to them. Whatever those were, these are known*

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to be genuine Pieces, occasioned by an Amour which had very extraordinary Consequences, and made a great Noise at the time when it happen'd, being between two of the most distinguish'd Persons of that Age.

These Letters therefore being truly written by the Persons themselves, whose Names they bear, and who were both remarkable for their Genius and Learning, as well as by a most extravagant Passion for each other, are every where full of Sentiments of the Heart, which are not to be imitated in a feign'd Story, and Touches of Nature, much more moving than any which cou'd flow from the Pen of a Writer of Novels, or enter into the Imagination of any one who had not felt the like Emotions and Distresses.

They

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They were originally written in Latin, and are extant in a Collection of the Works of Abelard, *printed at* Paris *in the Year* 1616. *With what Elegance and Beauty of Stile they were written in that Language, will sufficiently appear to the learned Reader, even by those few Citations which are set at the bottom of the* Page *in some places of the following History. But the Book here mention'd consisting chiefly of School Divinity, and of the Learning of those Times, and therefore being rarely to be met with but in publick Libraries, and in the Hands of some learned Men, the Letters of* Abelard *and* Heloise *are much more known by a Translation of them in* French, *first publish'd at the* Hague *in* 1693, *and which afterwards received several other more*

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more compleat Editions. This Tranſlation is much applauded, but who was the Author of it is not certainly known. Monſieur Bayle *ſays, he had been inform'd it was done by a Woman; and perhaps he thought no one beſides cou'd have enter'd ſo thoroughly into the Paſſion and Tenderneſs of ſuch Writings, for which that Sex ſeems to have a more natural Diſpoſition than the other. This may be judg'd by the Letters themſelves, among which thoſe of* Heloiſe *are the moſt Tender and Moving, and the Maſter ſeems in this Particular to have been exceeded by the Scholar.*

In ſome of the later Editions in French, *there has been prefix'd to the Letters an Hiſtorical Account of* Abelard *and* Heloiſe; *this is chiefly extracted from the*

Preface

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Preface of the Editor of Abelard's *Works in Latin, and from the Critical Dictionary of Monsieur* Bayle *, who has put together, under several Articles, all the Particulars he was able to Collect concerning these two famous Persons: And tho' the first Letter of* Abelard *to* Philintus, *in which he relates his own Story, may seem to have render'd this Account in part unnecessary; yet the Reader will not be displeas'd to see the Thred of the Relation entire, and continued to the Death of the Persons whose Misfortunes had made their Lives so very remarkable.*

It is indeed impossible to be unmov'd at the surprizing and multiply'd Afflictions and Persecutions

* *Vide Artic.* Abelard, Heloise, Foulques, *and* Paraclet.

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ons which befel a Man of Abelard's *fine Genius, when we see them so feelingly describ'd by his own Hand. Many of these were owing to the Malice of such as were his Enemies on the account of his superior Learning and Merit, yet the great Calamities of his Life took their Rise from his Indulgence of a criminal Passion, and giving himself a Loose to unwarrantable Pleasures. After this he was perpetually involved in Sorrow and Distress, and in vain sought for Ease and Quiet in a Monastick Life. The Letters between him and his beloved* Heloise *were not written 'till long after their Marriage and Separation, and when each of them was dedicated to a Life of Religion. Accordingly we find in them surprizing Mixtures of Devotion*

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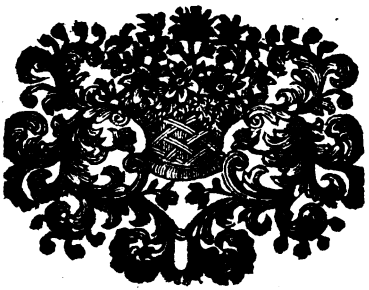
votion and Tenderneſs, of Penitence and remaining Frailty, and a lively Picture of Human Nature in its Contrarieties of Paſſion and Reaſon, its Infirmities and its Sufferings.



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CONTENTS.

THE *History of* Abelard *and* Heloise. *Page* 1 *to p.* 66

LETTERS.

I. Abelard *to* Philintus. *p.* 69

II. Heloise *to* Abelard. *p.* 97

III. Abelard *to* Heloise. *p.* 128

IV. Heloise *to* Abelard. *p.* 155

V. Heloise *to* Abelard. *p.* 175

VI. Abelard *to* Heloise. *p.* 192

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THE HISTORY OF *Abelard* and *Heloiſe*.

PETER ABELARD was born in the Village of *Palais*, in *Britany*. He liv'd in the Twelfth Century, in the Reigns of *Lewis the Groſs*, and *Lewis the Young*. His Father's Name was *Beranger*, a Gentleman of a conſiderable and wealthy Family. He took Care to give his Children a liberal and pious Education; eſpecially his Eldeſt Son *Peter*, on whom he endeavour'd to beſtow all poſſible Improvements, becauſe there appear'd in him a great Vivacity of Wit, joyn'd with Sweetneſs of Temper, and all imaginable Preſages of a great Man.

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When he had made ſome Advancement in Learning, he grew ſo fond of his Books, that, leſt Affairs of the World might interrupt his Proficiency in them, he quitted his Birth-right to his younger Brothers, and applied himſelf entirely to the Studies of Philoſophy and Divinity.

Of all the Sciences to which he applied himſelf, that which pleaſed him moſt, and in which he made the greateſt Progreſs, was Logick. He had a very ſubtle Wit, and was inceſſantly whetting it by Diſputes, out of a reſtleſs Ambition to be a Maſter of his Weapons. So that in a ſhort time he gain'd the Reputation of the greateſt Philoſopher of his Age; and has always been eſteem'd the Founder of what we call the *Learning of the Schoolmen.*

He finiſhed his Studies at *Paris*, where Learning was then in a very flouriſhing Condition. In this City he found that famous Profeſſor of Philoſophy, *William des Champeaux*, and ſoon became his favourite Scholar; but this did not laſt long. The Profeſſor was ſo hard put to it, to anſwer the ſubtle Objections of his new Scholar, that he grew uneaſie with him. The School ſoon run into Parties. The Senior Scholars, tranſported with Envy againſt *Abelard*, ſeconded their Maſter's Paſſion. All this ſerv'd only to encreaſe the young Man's Preſumption, who now thought himſelf ſufficiently qualified to ſet

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up a School of his own. For this purpoſe he choſe an advantageous Place, which was the Town of *Melun*, ten Leagues from *Paris*, where the *French* Court reſided at that time. *Champeaux* did all that he could to hinder the erecting of this School; but ſome of the great Courtiers being his Enemies, the Oppoſition he made to it only promoted the Deſign of his Rival.

The Reputation of this new Profeſſor made a marvellous Progreſs, and eclipſed that of *Champeaux*. Theſe Succeſſes ſwell'd *Abelard* ſo much, that he removed his School to *Corbeil*, in order to engage his Enemy the cloſer in more frequent Diſputations. But his exceſſive Application to Study brought upon him a long and dangerous Sickneſs, which conſtrain'd him to return to his Native Air.

After he had ſpent two Years in his own Country, he made a ſecond Adventure to *Paris*, where he found that his old Antagoniſt *Champeaux* had reſigned his Chair to another, and was retir'd into a Convent of *Canons Regular*, among whom he continued his Lectures. *Abelard* attackt him with ſuch Fury, that he quickly forced him to renounce his Tenets. Whereupon the poor Monk became ſo deſpicable, and his Antagoniſt in ſuch great Eſteem, that no Body went to the Lectures of *Champeaux*, and the very Man who ſucceeded him in his Profeſſorſhip, liſted

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under *Abelard*, and became his Scholar.

He was ſcarce fix'd in this Chair, before he found himſelf expoſed more than ever to the Strokes of the moſt cruel Envy. Endeavours were uſed to do him ill Offices by all thoſe who were any ways diſaffected to him; another Profeſſor was put into his Place who had thought it his Duty to ſubmit to *Abelard*; in ſhort, ſo many Enemies were raiſed againſt him, that he was forced to retreat from *Paris* to *Melun*, and there revive his Logick Lectures. But this held not long; for hearing that *Champeaux* with all his Infantry was retired into a Country Village, he came and poſted himſelf on Mount St. *Genevieve*, where he erected a new School, like a kind of Battery againſt him whom *Champeaux* had left to teach in *Paris*.

Champeaux underſtanding that his Subſtitute was thus beſieged in his School, brought the *Regular Canons* back again to their Monaſtery. But this, inſtead of relieving his Friend, cauſed all his Scholars to deſert him. At which the poor Philoſopher was ſo mortified, that he follow'd the Example of his Patron *Champeaux*, and turn'd Monk too.

The Diſpute now lay wholly between *Abelard* and *Champeaux*, who renew'd it, with great Warmth on both Sides; but the Senior had not the beſt on't. While it was depending, *Abelard* was obliged to

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viſit his Father and Mother, who, according to the Faſhion of thoſe Times, had reſolved to forſake the World, and retire into Convents, in order to devote themſelves more ſeriouſly to the Care of their Salvation.

Having aſſiſted at the Admiſſion of his Parents into their reſpective Monaſteries, and received their Bleſſing, he return'd to *Paris*, where, during his Abſence, his Rival had been promoted to the Biſhoprick of *Chalons*. And now being in a Condition to quit his School without any Suſpicion of flying from his Enemy, he reſolved to apply himſelf wholly to Divinity.

To this end he removed to *Laon*, where one *Anſelm* read Divinity-Lectures with good Reputation. But *Abelard* was ſo little ſatisfied with the old Man's Abilities, who, as he ſays, had a very mean Genius, and a great Fluency of Words without Senſe, that he took a Reſolution to hear no other Maſter than the Holy Scriptures. A good Reſolution! but not altogether ſafe for a Man, except he take the Spirit of God for his Guide, and be more concerned to diſtinguiſh Truth from Falſhood, than to confirm himſelf in thoſe Principles into which his own Fancy or Complexion, or the Prejudices of his Birth and Education, have inſenſibly led him.

Abelard, together with the Holy Scriptures, read the ancient Fathers and Do-

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ctors of the Church; in which he ſpent whole Days and Nights, and profited ſo well, that inſtead of returning to *Anſelm*'s Lectures, he took up the ſame Imployment, and begun to explain the Prophet *Ezekiel* to ſome of his Fellow-Pupils: He perform'd this Part ſo agreeably, and in ſo eaſie a Method, that he ſoon got a crowd of Auditors.

The jealous *Anſelm* could not bear this; he quickly found means to get the new Lecturer ſilenced. Upon this *Abelard* removed to *Paris* once more, where he proceeded with his publick Expoſition on *Ezekiel*, and ſoon acquired the ſame Reputation for his Divinity, he had before gained for his Philoſophy. His Eloquence and Learning procured him an incredible number of Scholars from all Parts; ſo that if he had minded ſaving of Mony, he might have grown rich with Eaſe in a ſhort time. And happy had it been for him, if among all the Enemies his Learning expos'd him to, he had guarded his Heart againſt the Charms of Love. But alas! the greateſt Doctors are not always the wiſeſt Men; as appears from Examples in every Age; but from none more remarkable than that of this Learned Man, whoſe Story I am now going to tell you.

Abelard, beſides his uncommon Merit as as Scholar, had all the Accompliſhments of a Gentleman. He had a Greatneſs of Mind which

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which nothing could ſhock, his Paſſions were Delicate, his Judgment Solid, and his Taſte Exquiſite. He was of a graceful Perſon, and carried himſelf with the Air of a Man of Quality. His Converſation was Sweet, Complaiſant, Eaſie, and Gentleman-like. It ſeem'd as tho' Nature had deſign'd him for a more elevated Employment than that of teaching the Sciences. He lookt upon Riches and Greatneſs with Contempt, and had no higher Ambition than to make his Name Famous among Learned Men, and to be reputed the greateſt Doctor of his Age; But he had human Frailty, and all his Philoſophy could not guard him from the Attacks of Love. For ſome Time indeed he had defended himſelf againſt this Paſſion pretty well, when the Temptation was but ſlight; but upon a more intimate Familiarity with agreeable Objects, he found his Reaſon fail him: Yet, in reſpect to his Wiſdom, he thought of Compounding the Matter, and reſolv'd at firſt, that Love and Philoſophy ſhould dwell together in the ſame Breaſt. He intended only to let out his Heart to the former, and that but for a little while; never conſidering that Love is a great Ruiner of Projects; and that when it has once got a ſhare in a Heart, it is eaſie to poſſeſs it ſelf of the whole.

He was now in the Seven or Eight and Twentieth Year of his Age, when he thought himſelf compleatly happy in all

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Reſpects, excepting that he wanted a Miſtreſs. He conſider'd therefore of making a Choice, but ſuch a one as might be moſt ſuitable to his Notions, and the Deſign he had of paſſing agreeably thoſe Hours he did not employ in his Study. He had ſeveral Ladies in his Eyes, to whom, as he ſays in one of his Letters, he could eaſily have recommended himſelf. For you muſt underſtand, that beſides his Qualifications mention'd before, he had a Vein of Poetry, and made abundance of little eaſie Songs, which he would ſing with all the Advantage of a gallant Air and pleaſant Voice. But tho' he was cut out for a Lover, he was not over-haſty in determining his Choice. He was not of a Humour to be pleas'd with the Wanton or Forward; he ſcorn'd eaſie Pleaſures, and ſought to encounter with Difficulties and Impediments, that he might conquer with the greater Glory. In ſhort, he had not yet ſeen the Woman he was to Love.

Not far from the Place where *Abelard* read his Lectures lived one Doctor *Fulbert*, a Canon of the Church of *Notre-Dame*. This Canon had a Neice named *Heloiſe* in his Houſe, whom he educated with great Care and Affection. Some Writers ſay *, that ſhe was the good Man's natural Daughter;

* *Papyr. Maſſo, Annal. l. 3. Joannes Canonicus Pariſinus, Heloyſiam naturalem filiam habebat praſtanti ingenio, formaque.*

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ter; but that, to prevent a publick Scandal, he gave out that ſhe was his Neice, by his Siſter, who upon her Death-bed had charged him with her Education. But tho' it was well known, in thoſe Times, as well as ſince, that the Neice of an Eccleſiaſtick is ſometimes more nearly related to him, yet of this Damſel's Birth and Parentage we have nothing very certain. There is reaſon to think, from one of her Letters to *Abelard*, that ſhe came of a mean Family; for ſhe owns that great Honour was done to her Side by this Alliance, and that he had married much below himſelf. So that what *Francis d'Amboiſe* ſays, that ſhe was of the Name and Family of *Montmorenci*, has no manner of Foundation. It is very probable ſhe was really and truly *Fulbert*'s Neice, as he affirm'd her to be. Whatever ſhe was for Birth, ſhe was a very engaging Woman; and if ſhe was not a perfect Beauty, ſhe appear'd ſuch at leaſt in *Abelard*'s Eyes. Her Perſon was Well-proportion'd, her Features Regular, her Eyes Sparkling, her Lips Vermilion and well form'd, her Complexion animated, her Air fine, and her Aſpect ſweet and agreeable. She had a ſurprizing Quickneſs of Wit, an incredible Memory, and a conſiderable ſhare of Learning, joyn'd with Humility; and all theſe Accompliſhments were attended with ſomething ſo graceful and moving, that it was

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impoſſible for thoſe who kept her Company not to be in Love with her.

As ſoon as *Abelard* had ſeen her and convers'd with her, the Charms of her Wit and Beauty made ſuch an Impreſſion upon his Heart, that he preſently conceived a moſt violent Paſſion for her, and reſolved to make it his whole Endeavour to win her Affections. And now he that formerly quitted his Patrimony to purſue his Studies, laid aſide all other Engagements to attend his new Paſſion.

In vain did Philoſophy and Reaſon importune him to return; he was deaf to their Call, and thought of nothing but how to enjoy the Sight and Company of his dear *Heloiſe*. And he ſoon met with the luckieſt Opportunity in the World. *Fulbert*, who had the greateſt Affection imaginable for his Neice, finding her to have a good ſhare of natural Wit, and a particular Genius for Learning, thought himſelf obliged to improve the Talents which Nature had ſo liberally beſtow'd on her. He had already put her to learn ſeveral Languages, which ſhe quickly came to underſtand ſo well, that her Fame began to ſpread it ſelf abroad, and the Wit and Learning of *Heloiſe* was every where diſcours'd of. And tho' her Uncle for his own ſhare was no great Scholar, he was very ſollicitous that his Neice ſhould have all poſſible Improvements. He was willing therefore ſhe ſhou'd

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have Maſters to inſtruct her in what ſhe had a Mind to Learn, but he loved his Mony; and this kept him from providing for her Education ſo well as ſhe deſired.

Abelard, who knew *Heloiſe*'s Inclinations, and the Temper of her Uncle, thought this an Opportunity favourable to his Deſign. He was already well acquainted with *Fulbert*, as being his Brother-Canon in the ſame Church; and he obſerved how fond the other was of his Friendſhip, and what an Honour he eſteem'd it to be intimate with a Perſon of his Reputation. He therefore told him one Day in Familiarity, that he was at a loſs for ſome Houſe to Board in; and if you could find Room for me, ſaid he, in yours, I leave it to you to name the Terms.

The good Man immediately conſidering, that by this Means he ſhould provide an able Maſter for his Neice, who inſtead of taking Mony of him, offer'd to pay him well for his Board, embrac'd his Propoſal with all the Joy imaginable, gave him a thouſand Careſſes, and deſir'd he would conſider him for the future as one ambitious of the ſtricteſt Friendſhip with him.

What an unſpeakable Joy was this to the amorous *Abelard!* to conſider that he was going to live with her, who was the only Object of his Deſires! that he ſhould have the Opportunity of ſeeing and converſing with her every Day, and of acquainting

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quainting her with his Paſſion! However he conceal'd his Joy at preſent, leſt he ſhould make his Intentions ſuſpected. We told you before how liberal Nature had been to our Lover, in making his Perſon every way agreeable; ſo that he flatter'd himſelf that it was almoſt impoſſible * that any Woman ſhou'd reject his Addreſſes. Perhaps he was miſtaken; the Sex has Variety of Humours. However, conſider him as a Philoſopher who had hitherto liv'd in a ſtrict Chaſtity †, he certainly reaſon'd well in the Buſineſs of Love, when he concluded that *Heloiſe* would be an eaſier Conqueſt to him than others, becauſe her Learning gave him an Opportunity of eſtabliſhing a Correſpondence by Letters, in which he might diſcover his Paſſion with greater freedom, than he durſt preſume to uſe in Converſation.

Some time after the Canon had taken *Abelard* into his Houſe, as they were diſcourſing one Day about things ſomewhat above *Fulbert*'s Capacity, the latter turn'd the Diſcourſe inſenſibly to the good Qualities of his Neice; he inform'd *Abelard* of the Excellency of her Wit, and how ſtrong

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* *Tanti quippe tunc nominis eram & juventutis & formæ gratia præeminebam, ut quamcunque fœminarum noſtro dignarer amore nullam vererer repulſam.* 1 Epiſt. Abel. p. 10.

† *Fœna libidini cœpi laxare, qui antea viveram continentiſſimè.* Ibid.

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a Propensity she had to improve in Learning; and withal made it his earnest Request, that he would take the Pains to instruct her. *Abelard* pretended to be surpriz'd at a Proposal of this Nature. He told him that Learning was not the proper Business of Women; that such Inclinations in them had more of Humour or Curiosity, than a solid Desire of Knowledge; and could hardly pass, among either the Learned or Ignorant, without drawing upon them the Imputation of Conceit and Affectation. *Fulbert* answer'd, that this was very true of Women of common Capacities; but he hop'd when he had discours'd with his Neice, and found what Progress she had made already, and what a Capacity she had for Learning, he would be of another Opinion. *Abelard* assured him, he was ready to do all he could for her Improvement, and if she was not like other Women, who hate to Learn any thing beyond their Needle, he would spare for no Pains to make *Heloise* answer the Hopes which her Uncle had conceived of her.

The Canon was transported with the Civility of the young Doctor; he return'd him Thanks, and protested he could not do him a more acceptable Service than to assist his Neice in her Endeavours to learn; he therefore entreated him once more, to set apart some of his Time, which he did not imploy in publick, for this purpose: And (as if he had known

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known his design'd Intreague, and was willing to promote it) he committed her intirely to his Care, and begg'd of him to treat her with the Authority of a Master, not only to chide her, but even to correct her whenever she was guilty of any Neglect or Disobedience to his Commands.

Fulbert, in this, shew'd a Simplicity without Example; but the Affection which he had for his Neice was so blind, and *Abelard* had so well establish'd his Reputation for Wisdom, that the Uncle never scrupled in the least to trust them together, and thought he had all the Security in the World for their Virtue. *Abelard*, you may be sure, made good use of the Freedom which was given him. He saw his beautiful Creature every Hour, he set her Lessons every Day, and was extreamly pleased to see what Proficiency she made. *Heloise*, for her part, was so taken with her Master, that she lik'd nothing so well as what she learn'd from him; and the Master was charm'd with that Quickness of Apprehension, with which his Scholar learn'd the most difficult Lessons. But he did not intend to stop here. He knew so well how to insinuate into the Affections of this young Person, he gave her such plain Intimations of what was in his Heart, and spoke so agreeably of the Passion which he had conceived for her, that he had the Satisfaction of seeing himself well understood. It is

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no difficult matter to make a Girl of Eighteen in Love. And *Abelard*, having ſo much Wit and agreeable Humour, muſt needs make a much greater Progreſs in her Affections, than ſhe did in the Leſſons which he taught her. So that in a ſhort time ſhe fell ſo much in love him, that ſhe could deny him nothing.

Fulbert had a Country Houſe at *Corbeil*, to which our Lovers often reſorted, under Pretence of applying themſelves more cloſely to their Studies: But the Truth was, the Students did not wholly devote themſelves there to the Buſineſs of Learning; they were much more taken up with the Affair of Love. There they converſed freely, and gave themſelves up entirely to the Pleaſures of a mutual Paſſion. They took Advantage of that Privacy which Study and Contemplation require, without ſubjecting themſelves to the Cenſure of thoſe who obſerv'd it.

In this Retirement, *Abelard* owns that more Time was employ'd in ſoft Careſſes than in Lectures of Philoſophy. Sometimes he pretended to uſe the Severity of a Maſter; and the better to deceive ſuch as might be Spies upon them, he exclaim'd againſt *Heloiſe*, and reproached her for her Negligence. But how different were his Menaces from thoſe which are inſpir'd by Anger!

Never

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Never did two Lovers indulge their Delights as these did for five or six Months; they liv'd in all the Endearments which could enter into the Heart of young Beginners. This is *Abelard*'s own Account of the matter. He compares himself to such as have been long kept in a starving Condition, and at last are brought to a Feast. A grave and studious Man exceeds a *Debauché* in his Enjoyments of a Woman whom he loves, and of whom he is passionately beloved.

Abelard being thus enchanted with the Caresses of his Mistress, neglected all his serious and important Affairs. His Performances in publick were wretched. His Scholars perceiv'd it, and soon gues's'd the Reason. His Head was turn'd to nothing but amorous Verses. His School was his Aversion, and he spent as little Time in it as he could. As for his Lectures, they were commonly the old ones served up again: The Night was wholly lost from his Studies; and his Leisure was employ'd in writing Songs, which were dispers'd and sung in divers Provinces of *France* many Years after. In short, our Lovers, who were in their own Opinion the happiest Pair in the World, kept so little guard that their Amours were every where talk'd of, and all the World saw plainly that the Sciences were not always the Subject of their Conversation. Only honest *Fulbert*, under

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uuder whole Noſe all this was done, was the laſt Man that heard any thing of it: He wanted Eyes to ſee that which was viſible to all the World; and if any Body went about to tell him of it, he was prepoſſeſt with ſo good Opinion of his Neice and her Maſter, that he would believe nothing againſt them.

But at laſt ſo many Diſcoveries were daily made to him, that he cou'd not help believing ſomething; he therefore reſolved to ſeparate them, and by that means prevent the ill Conſequences of their too great Familiarity; however he thought it beſt to convict them himſelf, before he proceeded further; and therefore watched them ſo cloſely that he had one Day an Opportunity of receiving ocular Satisfaction that the Reports he had heard were true. In ſhort, he ſurpriz'd them together. And tho' he was naturally Cholerick, yet he appear'd ſo moderate on this Occaſion as to leave them under diſmal Apprehenſions of ſomething worſe to come after. The Reſult was, that they muſt be parted.

Who can expreſs the Torment our Lovers felt upon this Separation! however, it ſerved only to unite their Hearts more firmly; they were but the more eager to ſee one another. Difficulties encreas'd their Deſires, and put them upon any Attempts, without regarding what might be the Conſequence. *Abelard*, finding it impoſſible

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poſſible to live without his dear *Heloiſe*, endeavour'd to ſettle a Correſpondence with her by her Maid *Agaton*, who was a handſome brown Girl, well-ſhaped, and likely enough to have pleas'd a Man who was not otherwiſe engaged. But what a Surprize was it to our Doctor, to find this Girl refuſe his Mony, and in recompence of the Services ſhe was to do him with her Miſtreſs, demanding no leſs a Reward than his Heart, and making him at once a plain Declaration of Love! *Abelard*, who could love none but *Heloiſe*, turn'd from her abruptly, without anſwering a word. But a rejected Woman is a dangerous Creature. *Agaton* knew well how to revenge the Affront put upon her, and fail'd not to acquaint *Fulbert* with *Abelard*'s Offers to her, without ſaying a word how ſhe had been diſobliged. *Fulbert* thought it was time to look about him: He thankt the Maid for her Care, and entred into Meaſures with her, how to keep *Abelard* from viſiting his Neice.

The Doctor was now more perplex'd than ever; he had no way left but to apply himſelf to *Heloiſe*'s ſinging Maſter: And the Gold which the Maid refuſed, prevail'd with him. By his Means *Abelard* convey'd a Letter to *Heloiſe*; in which he acquainted her that he intended to come and ſee her at Night, and that the way he had contrived, was over the Garden-wall by

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by the help of a Ladder of Cords. This Project ſucceeded, and brought them together. After the firſt Tranſports of this ſhort Interview, *Heloiſe*, who had found ſome more than ordinary Symptoms within her, acquainted her Lover with it. She had inform'd him of it before by a Letter: And now having this Opportunity to conſult about it, they agreed that ſhe ſhould go to a Siſter of his in *Britany*, at whoſe Houſe ſhe might be privately brought to Bed. But before they parted, he endeavour'd to comfort her, and make her eaſie in this Diſtreſs, by giving her Aſſurances of Marriage. When *Heloiſe* heard this Propoſal ſhe peremptorily rejected it, and gave ſuch Reaſons * for her Refuſal, as left *Abelard* in the greateſt Aſtoniſhment.

Indeed a Refuſal of this Nature is ſo extraordinary a thing, that perhaps another Inſtance of it is not to be found in Hiſtory. I perſwade my ſelf therefore, that I ſhall not diſoblige my Reader, if I make ſome few Remarks upon it. It often happens that the Paſſion of Love ſtifles or over-rules the Rebukes of Conſcience; but it is unuſual for it to extinguiſh the Senſibility of Honour. I don't ſpeak of Perſons of a mean Birth and no Education; but

* *See* Abelard's *Letter to* Filintes, *and* Heloiſe's *firſt Letter to* Abelard.

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but for others, all young Women, I ſuppoſe, that engage in Love Intreagues, flatter themſelves with one of theſe Views; either they hope they ſhall not prove with Child, or they ſhall conceal it from the World, or they ſhall get themſelves married. As for ſuch as reſolve to deſtroy the Fruit of their Amours, there are but few who are ſo void of all natural Affection, as to be capable of this utmoſt Degree of Barbarity. However this ſhews plainly, that if Love tyrannizes ſometimes, it is ſuch a Tyrant as leaves Honour in Poſſeſſion of its Rights. But *Heloiſe* had a Paſſion ſo ſtrong, that ſhe was not at all concern'd for her Honour or Reputation. She was over-joy'd to find her ſelf with Child, and yet ſhe did her utmoſt not to be married. Never ſure was ſo odd an Example, as theſe two things made, when put together. The firſt was very extraordinary; and how many young Women in the World would rather be married to a diſagreeable Husband, than live in a State of Reproach? They know the Remedy is bad enough, and will coſt them dear; but what ſignifies that, ſo long as the Name of Husband hides the Flaws made in their Honour? But as for *Heloiſe*, ſhe was not ſo nice in this Point. An exceſs of Paſſion never heard of before, made her chuſe to be *Abelard*'s Miſtreſs rather than his Wife. We ſhall ſee, in the Courſe of this Hiſtory,

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Hiſtory, how firm ſhe was in this Reſolution, with what Arguments ſhe ſupported it, and how earneſtly ſhe perſwaded her Gallant to be of the ſame Mind.

Abelard, who was willing to loſe no time, leſt his dear *Heloiſe* ſhould fall into her Uncle's Hands, diſguiſed her in the Habit of a Nun, and ſent her away with the greateſt Diſpatch, hoping, that after ſhe was brought to Bed, he ſhould have more leiſure to perſuade her to Marriage, by which they might skreen themſelves from the Reproach which muſt otherwiſe come upon them, as ſoon as the Buſineſs ſhould be publickly known.

As ſoon as *Heloiſe* was ſet forward on her Journey, *Abelard* reſolv'd to make *Fulbert* a Viſit; in order to appeaſe him, if poſſible, and prevent the ill Effects of his juſt Indignation.

The News that *Heloiſe* was privately withdrawn, ſoon made a great Noiſe in the Neighbourhood; and reaching *Fulbert*'s Ears, fill'd him with Grief and Melancholy. Beſides that he had a very tender Affection for his Neice, and could not live without her, he had the utmoſt Reſentment of the Affront which *Abelard* had put upon him, by abuſing the Freedom he had allowed him. This fired him with ſuch implacable Fury, as in the end fell heavy upon our poor Lovers, and had very dreadful Conſequences.

When

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When *Fulbert* ſaw *Abelard*, and heard from him the Reaſon why *Heloiſe* was withdrawn, never was Man in ſuch a Paſſion. He abandon'd himſelf to the utmoſt Tranſports of Rage, Deſpair, and a thirſt of Revenge. All the Affronts, Reproaches and Menaces that could be thought of were heaped upon *Abelard*, who was, poor Man, very Paſſive, and ready to make the Canon all the Satisfaction he was able. He gave him leave to ſay what he pleaſed; and when he ſaw that he had tired himſelf with exclaiming, he took up the Diſcourſe, and ingenuouſly confeſt his Crime. Then he had Recourſe to all the Prayers, Submiſſions and Promiſes he could invent; and begged of him to conſider the force of Love, and what Foils this Tyrant has given to the greateſt Men: That the Occaſion of the preſent Misfortune, was the moſt violent Paſſion that ever was; that this Paſſion continued ſtill; and that he was ready to give both him and his Neice all the Satisfaction which this ſort of Injury required. Will you marry her then? ſaid *Fulbert* interrupting him. Yes, replied *Abelard*, if you pleaſe, and ſhe will conſent. If I pleaſe! ſaid the Canon, pauſing a little; If ſhe will conſent! And do you queſtion either? Upon this he was going to offer him his Reaſons, after his haſty way, why they ſhould be married: But *Abelard* entreated him to ſuppreſs his Paſſion

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Paſſion a-while, and hear what he had to offer: Which was, that their Marriage might for ſome time be kept Secret. No, ſays the Canon; the Diſhonour you have done my Neice is publick, and the Reparation you make her ſhall be ſo too. But *Abelard* told him, that ſince they were to be one Family, he hoped he would conſider his Intereſt as his own. At laſt, after a great many Entreaties, *Fulbert* ſeem'd content it ſhould be as *Abelard* deſired, That he ſhould marry *Heloiſe* after ſhe was brought to Bed, and that in the mean time the Buſineſs ſhould be kept Secret.

Abelard, having given his Scholars a Vacation, return'd into *Britany*, to viſit his deſigned Spouſe, and to acquaint her with what had paſſed. She was not at all concern'd at her Uncle's Diſpleaſure; but that which troubled her was, the Reſolution which ſhe ſaw her Lover had taken to marry her. She endeavour'd to diſſwade him from it with all the Arguments ſhe could think of. She begun with repreſenting to him the Wrong he did himſelf in thinking of Marriage: That as ſhe never loved him but for his own ſake, ſhe preferr'd his Glory, Reputation and Intereſt before her own. I know my Uncle, ſaid ſhe, will never be pacified with any thing we can do: And what Honour ſhall I get by being your Wife, when at the ſame time I certainly ruin your Reputation? What Curſe may I not

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not justly fear, should I rob the World of so Eminent a Person as you are? What an Injury shall I do the Church? How much shall I disoblige the Learned? And what a Shame and Disparagement will it be to you, whom Nature has fitted for the Publick Good, to devote your self intirely to a Wife? Remember what St. *Paul* says, *Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.* If neither this great Man, nor the Fathers of the Church, can make you change your Resolution, consider at least what your Philosophers say of it. *Socrates* has proved, by many Arguments, that a Wise Man ought not to marry. *Tully* put away his Wife *Terentia*; and when *Hircius* offer'd him his Sister in Marriage, he told him he desired to be excused, because he could never bring himself to divide his Thoughts between his Books and his Wife. In short, said she, how can the Study of Divinity and Philosophy comport with the Cries of Children, the Songs of Nurses, and all the Hurry of a Family? What an odd sight will it be, to see Maids and Scholars, Desks and Cradles, Books and Distaffs, Pens and Spindles one among another? Those who are Rich are never disturb'd with the Care and Charges of House-keeping. But with you Scholars it is far otherwise. * He that

* *Heloissa dehortabat me a nuptiis. Nuptiæ non conveniunt cum philosophia*, &c. Oper. Abel. p. 14.

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that will get an Eſtate muſt mind the Affairs of the World, and conſequently is taken off from the Study of Divinity and Philoſophy. Obſerve the Conduct of the Wiſe Pagans in this Point, who preferr'd a ſingle Life before Marriage, and be aſhamed that you cannot come up to them. Be more careful to maintain the Character and Dignity of a Philoſopher. Don't you know that there is no Action of Life which draws after it ſo ſure and long a Repentance, and to ſo little purpoſe? You fancy to your ſelf the Enjoyments you ſhall have in being bound to me by a Bond which nothing but Death can break: But know, there is no ſuch thing as ſweet Chains; and there is a thouſand Times more Glory, Honour, and Pleaſure in keeping firm to a Union which Love alone has eſtabliſhed, which is ſupported by mutual Eſteem and Merit, and which owes its Continuance to nothing but the Satisfaction of ſeeing each other free. Shall the Laws and Cuſtoms which the groſs and carnal World has invented, hold us together more ſurely than the Bonds of mutual Affection? Take my word for it, you'll ſee me too often, when you ſee me every Day: you'll have no Value for my Love nor Favours, when they are due to you, and coſt you no Care. Perhaps you don't think of all this at preſent; but you'll think of nothing elſe when it will be too late. I

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don't take notice what the World will ſay, to ſee a Man in your Circumſtances get him a Wife, and ſo throw away your Reputation, your Fortune, and your Quiet. In ſhort, continued ſhe, the Quality of Miſtreſs is a hundred Times more pleaſing to me, than that of Wife. Cuſtom indeed has given a Dignity to this latter Name, and we are impoſed upon by it; but Heav'n is my Witneſs, I had rather be *Abelard*'s Miſtreſs, than lawful Wife to the Emperor of the whole World. I am very ſure I ſhall always prefer your Advantage and Satisfaction, before my own Honour, and all the Reputation, Wealth and Enjoyments, which the moſt ſplendid Marriage cou'd bring me. Thus *Heloiſe* argued, and added a great many more Reaſons which I forbear to relate, leſt I ſhou'd tire my Reader. It is enough for him to know that they are chiefly grounded upon her Preference of Love to Marriage, and Liberty to Neceſſity.

I will add but one Reflection which the Famous Mr. *Bayle* makes upon this Conduct of *Heloiſe*. I cannot tell (ſays he) what were the Sentiments of *Heloiſe*, but certainly in her Conduct there is one of the moſt refined Myſteries of Love. It has been thought that Marriage flattens the Taſte of its chief Favour, that when Engagement or Neceſſity turns a Matter of Inclination into a Task, it loſes of its natural

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natural Agreeableneſs. So that it is a Saying among the Polite, *That a Wife is more for Faſhion than Pleaſure*, "Marriage, ſays "*Montaigne*, has Convenience, Juſtice, "Honour, and Conſtancy for its Share; "a flat, but a more univerſal Pleaſure. "Love founds it ſelf wholly upon Plea- "ſure, and indeed has it more full and "lively; a Pleaſure increaſed by Difficul- "ty muſt have its Ardour. 'Tis no more "Love, if without Darts and Fire. The "Liberality of Ladies is too profuſe in "Marriage, and dulls the Point of Af- "fection and Deſire.

We might therefore ſuppoſe that *Heloiſe* was afraid leſt Marriage ſhould prove the Tomb of Love. The Count *de Buſſi*, who paſſes for the Tranſlator of ſome of her Letters, makes this to be her Meaning, tho' clothed in delicate Language. But if we examine thoſe which ſhe writ to *Abelard* after their Separation, and the Expreſſions ſhe uſes to put him in Mind, that he was indebted for the Paſſion ſhe had for him to nothing but Love it ſelf, we muſt allow that ſhe had more refin'd Notions, and that never Woman was ſo diſintereſted. She loved *Abelard*, 'tis true; but ſhe declared, it was not his Sex that ſhe moſt valued in him.

Some Authors * are of Opinion, that

* *Moreri Dict.*

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it was not an Exceſs of Love which made *Abelard* preſs *Heloiſe* to Marriage, but only to quiet his Conſcience. But how can any one tell his Reaſons for Marriage better than he himſelf? Others ſay *, that if *Heloiſe* did really oppoſe *Abelard*'s Deſign of marrying her ſo earneſtly, it was not becauſe ſhe thought better of Concubinage than a married Life; but becauſe her Affection and Reſpect for her Lover, leading her to ſeek his Honour and Advantage in all Things, ſhe was afraid that by marrying him ſhe ſhould ſtand between him and a Biſhoprick, which ſhe thought his Wit and Learning well deſerved. But there is no ſuch thing in her Letters, nor in the long Account which *Abelard* has left us of the Arguments which his Miſtreſs uſed, to diſſwade him from Marriage. Theſe are the Faults of many Authors, who put ſuch Words in the Mouths of Perſons, as are moſt conformable to their own Ideas. It is often more advantageous that a Woman ſhould leave her Lover free for Church-Dignities, than render him incapable of them by Marriage. But is it juſt therefore to ſuppoſe, that *Heloiſe* had any ſuch Motives? There is a known Story of a Man that was poſſeſt of a Prebend, and quitted it for a Wife. The Day after the Wedding, he ſaid to his Bride, My Dear, conſider how

* *Fran. d'Amboiſe.*

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how paſſionately I loved you, ſince I loſt my Preferment to marry you. You have done a very fooliſh thing, ſaid ſhe; you you might have kept that, and have had me notwithſtanding.

But to return to our Lovers. A modern Author, who well underſtood human Nature, has affirm'd; * *That Women by the Favours they grant to the Men grow the fonder of them; but on the contrary, the Men grow more indifferent.* This is not always true. *Abelard* was not the leſs enamour'd with his dear *Heloiſe*, after ſhe had given him the utmoſt Proofs of her Love; and their Familiarity was ſo far from having abated his Flame, that it ſeems, all the Eloquence of *Heloiſe* could not perſuade *Abelard*, that he wrong'd himſelf in thinking to marry her. He admir'd the Wit, the Paſſion, and the Ingenuity of his Miſtreſs; but in theſe things he did not come ſhort of her: He knew ſo well how to repreſent to her the neceſſity of Marriage, the Diſcourſe which he had about it with *Fulbert*, his Rage if they declined it, and how dangerous it might be to both of them, that at laſt ſhe conſented to do whatever he pleas'd; but ſtill with an inconceivable Reluctance, which ſhew'd that ſhe yielded for no other Reaſon, but the fear of diſobliging him.

* *M. de la Bruyere.*

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Abelard was willing to be near his Miſtreſs, till ſhe was brought to Bed, which in a ſhort time ſhe was of a Boy. I will not be particular in relating how much this renew'd the Tenderneſs of our Lovers; or in deſcribing their Joy and Cares on this Occaſion. But I proceed to acquaint the Reader, that as ſoon as *Heloiſe* was fit to go Abroad *Abelard* carried her to *Paris*, where they were married in the moſt private manner that could be, having no other Company but *Fulbert*, and two or three particular Friends. However, the Wedding quickly came to be known. The News of it was already whiſper'd about; People ſoon begun to talk of it more openly, till at laſt they mention'd it to the married Pair. *Fulbert*, who was leſs concern'd to keep his Word, than to cover the Reproach of his Family, took care to ſpread it abroad. But *Heloiſe*, who loved *Abelard* a thouſand Times better than ſhe did her ſelf, and always valued her dear Doctor's Honour above her own, denied it with the moſt ſolemn Proteſtations, and did all ſhe cou'd to make the World believe her. She conſtantly affirm'd, that the Reports of it were meer Slanders; That *Abelard* never propoſed any ſuch thing; and if he had, ſhe would never have conſented to it. In ſhort, ſhe deny'd it ſo conſtantly, and with ſuch Earneſtneſs, that ſhe was generally believed. Many People thought, and boldly

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boldly affirm'd, that the Doctor's Enemies had ſpread this Story on purpoſe to leſſen his Character. This Report came to *Fulbert*'s Ears, who, knowing that *Heloiſe* was the ſole Author of it, fell into ſo outragious a Paſſion at her, that after a thouſand Reproaches and Menaces he proceeded to uſe her barbarouſly. But *Abelard*, who loved her never the worſe for being his Wife, could not ſee this many Days with Patience. He reſolved therefore to order Matters ſo as to deliver her from this State of Perſecution. To this purpoſe they conſulted together what Courſe was to be taken; and agreed, that for ſetting them both free, her from the Power and ill Humour of her Uncle, and him from the perſecuting Reports which went about of him, *Heloiſe* ſhould retire into a Convent, where ſhe ſhould take the Habit of a Nun, all but the Vail, that ſo ſhe might eaſily come out again, when they ſhould have a more favourable Opportunity. This Deſign was propoſed, approved, and executed, almoſt at the ſame time. By this means they effectually put a ſtop to all Reports about their Marriage. But the Canon was too dangerous a Perſon to be admitted to this Conſultation; he would never have agreed to their Propoſal; nor could he hear of it without the utmoſt Rage. 'Twas then that he conceived a new deſire of Revenge, which he purſued

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till he had executed it in the moſt cruel manner imaginable. This Retreat of *Heloiſe* gave him the more ſenſible Affliction, becauſe ſhe was ſo far from covering her own Reputation, that ſhe compleated his Shame. He conſidered it as *Abelard*'s Contrivance, and a freſh Inſtance of his perfidious Dealing towards him. And this Reflection put him upon ſtudying how to be Revenged on them both at one Stroke; which aiming at the Root of Miſchief, ſhould for ever diſable them from offending again.

While this Plot was in Agitation, our Lovers, who were not apt to trouble their Heads about what might happen, ſpent their Time in the moſt pleaſant and agreeable manner that could be. *Abelard* could not live long without a Sight of his dear *Heloiſe*; he made her frequent Viſits in the Convent of *Argenteuil*, to which ſhe was retired. The Nuns of this Abby enjoyed a very free kind of Life: The Grates and Parlours were open enough. As for *Heloiſe*, ſhe had ſuch excellent Qualifications, as made the good Siſters very fond of her, and extreamly pleaſed that they had ſuch an amiable Companion. And as they were not ignorant what Reports there were abroad, that ſhe was married to the famous *Abelard*, (tho' ſhe denied it to the laſt) the moſt diſcerning among them, obſerving the frequent Viſits of the Doctor, eaſily imagin'd

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gin'd that ſhe had Reaſons for keeping her ſelf private; and ſo they took her Caſe into Conſideration, and expreſt a wonderful Compaſſion for her Misfortunes.

Some of them, whom *Heloiſe* loved above the reſt, and in whom ſhe put great Confidence, were not a little aiding and aſſiſting in the private Interviews which ſhe had with *Abelard*, and in giving him Opportunities to enter the Convent. The amorous Doctor made the beſt uſe of every thing: The Habit which *Heloiſe* wore, the Place where he was to ſee her, the Times and Seaſons proper for his Viſit; the Stratagems which muſt be uſed to facilitate his Entrance, and carry him undiſcover'd to *Heloiſe*'s Chamber; the Difficulties they met with, the Reaſons they had for not letting it be known who they were; and the fear they were in of being taken together: All this gave their Amours an Air of Novelty, and added to their lawful Embraces all the Taſte of forbidden or ſtolen Pleaſures.

Abelard expreſſes himſelf very naturally on this Subject, in a Letter he wrote to *Heloiſe*, a conſiderable time after their being Profeſſed, in which recollecting their paſt Pleaſures he reminds her of the frequent Viſits he made her at *Argenteuil*, and what paſt between them one Day, for want of a more convenient Place, in a Chappel, without any regard to the Bleſſed Virgin

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to whom it was consecrated. In the same Letter, making a sort of Confession of the Irregularities his immoderate Ardour occasioned him to commit, he complains that not the most solemn Fasts, even not the Passion Week it self, could make him moderate his Transports; insomuch that when she made some Scruples, he threatened her, and even compelled her with Blows to consent. * This was indeed a Man very free from the Superstition of those who observed Days and Feasts, and New Moons and Sabbaths.

These Excesses had then their Charms, but in the end had fatal Consequences: The furious Canon persisting in his Design of being revenged on *Abelard*, notwithstanding his Marriage with his Neice, found Means to corrupt a Domestick of the Unfortunate Doctor, who gave Admittance into his Master's Chamber to some Assassins hired by *Fulbert*, who seised him in his Sleep, and cruelly deprived him of his Manhood, but not his Life. The Servant and his Accomplices fled for it; the wretched *Abelard* raised such terrible Out-cries, that the People in the House and the Neigh-

* *Sed & te nolentem, & prout poteras reluctantem & dissuadentem quæ naturâ infirmior eras, sæpius minis ac flagellis, ad consensum trahebam.* Op. Abel.

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Neighbours being alarm'd, haſten'd to him, and gave him ſuch ſpeedy Aſſiſtance, that he was ſoon out of a Condition of fearing Death.

The News of this Accident made a great Noiſe, and its Singularity raiſed the Curioſity of abundance of Perſons, who came the next Day, as in Proceſſion, to ſee, to lament and comfort him. His Scholars loudly bewail'd his Misfortune, and the Women diſtinguiſhed themſelves upon this Occaſion, by Extraordinary Marks of Tenderneſs. The Doctor had indeed been very ſignal in his Services to that Sex. An Ill-natured Rallier would be apt to ſay, they did not Lament ſo much out of Friendſhip for him, as out of Fear of Ill Conſequences. Who knows, if the Example of the Canon ſhould prove contagious, and this barbarous manner of puniſhing Gallantries prevail, to what Extremities they may be driven? And 'tis probable among the great Number of Ladies which pity'd *Abelard*, there were ſome with whom he had been very intimate: For his Philoſophy did not make him ſcrupulous enough to eſteem every ſmall Infidelity a Crime, when it did not leſſen his Conſtant Love of *Heloiſe*. Thoſe who were of the Number of his peculiar Friends, and thoſe who had hopes of winning his Friendſhip, grieved for the loſs of their Happineſs, and others lamented the Ill Precedent.

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This Reflection may seem too severe, but perhaps will appear more reasonable upon reading the following Story. The *Greeks* * made War with the Duke of *Benevento*, and push'd him so vigorously, that he was obliged to beg Assistance of *Theobald* Marquis of *Spoleto*, his Alley; who one Day happning to make some *Greeks* Prisoners, after having reduced them to the Condition of the Person whose Story we write, sent them back to their General, with Orders to acquaint him, that he had done this, to oblige the Emperor his Master, who he knew greatly esteemed Eunuchs, and that he would endeavour in a short time to furnish him with a much larger Number. This Lord was preparing to be as good as his Word, when the Wife of one whom his Men had just taken, came all in Tears to the Camp, and desired to speak with the General; the Marquis asking her what was the Occasion of her Grief, Sir, said she, I am amazed so great a Hero as you should amuse your self with making War with Women, since the Men are not in a Condition to resist you. *Theobald* reply'd, that since the Story of the *Amazons*, he never heard of any one that warr'd upon the Women. Ah, Sir, said the *Greek*, can a crueller War be made on us than to deprive our Husbands of

* *Biblioth. Universf.* Tom 2. p. 10.

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of what gives us Health, Pleaſure and Children? The other Day you beat us, and took our Bag and Baggage; I did not complain of that. But the loſs I now fear, and which you have made many of my Companions undergo, being irreparable, I could not but come and ſollicite your Compaſſion. The Simplicity of this Woman ſo pleaſed the Conqueror, and the whole Army, that he order'd her Huſband and all that he had ſhould be reſtored to her. But to return to *Abelard*.

This Action of *Fulbert* was too Tragical to paſs unpuniſhed; the Traiterous Servant and one of the Aſſaſſins were ſeiſed, and condemned to loſe their Eyes, and to ſuffer what they had done to *Abelard*. But *Fulbert* denying he had any ſhare in the Action, ſaved himſelf from the Puniſhment, with the loſs only of his Benefices. This Sentence did not ſatisfie *Abelard*, (and indeed it was too indulgent to the Canon, who ought at leaſt to have ſuffer'd equally;) he made his Complaint to no purpoſe to the Biſhop and Canons, and if he had made a Remonſtrance at *Rome*, where he once had a deſign of carrying the Matter, 'tis probable he would have had no better Succeſs. It requires too much Mony to gain a Cauſe there. One *Foulques*, Prior of *Deuil*, an intimate Friend of *Abelard*, wrote thus to him upon the Occaſion of his

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his Misfortune. * *If you Appeal to the Pope, without bringing an immenſe Sum of Mony, it will be uſeleſs; nothing can ſatisfie the Infinite Avarice and Luxury of the* Romans. *I queſtion if you have enough for ſuch an Undertaking; and if you attempt it, nothing will perhaps remain but the Vexation of having flung away ſo much Mony. They who go to* Rome *without large Sums to Squander away, will return juſt as they went, the Expence of their Journey only excepted.* But ſince I am upon *Foulques*'s Letter, which is too Extraordinary to be paſſed over in Silence, I ſhall give the Reader ſome of its more remarkable Paſſages, adding ſome Reflections which may make him Amends for the trouble of a new Digreſſion.

This Friend of *Abelard* lays before him many Advantages which might be drawn from his Misfortune. He tells him, his Extraordinary Talents, Subtilty, Eloquence and Learning, had drawn from all Parts an incredible Number of Auditors; and ſo fill'd him with exceſſive Vanity: He hints gently at another thing, which contributed not a little towards making him proud; namely, that the Women continually follow'd him, and gloried in drawing him into their Snares. This Misfortune therefore

* *This Letter is extant in* Latin *in* Abelard's *Works.*

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fore would Cure him of his Pride, and free him from thoſe Snares of Women which had reduced him even to Indigence, tho' his Profeſſion got him a large Revenue; and now he would never impoveriſh himſelf by his Galantries.

Heloiſe her ſelf in ſome Paſſages of her Letters ſays, that there was neither Maid nor Wife *, who in *Abelard*'s Abſence did not form Deſires for him, and in his Preſence was not inflamed with Love: That Queens themſelves and Ladies of the firſt Quality envy'd the Pleaſures ſhe enjoy'd with him. But we are not to take theſe Words of *Heloiſe* in a ſtrict Senſe, becauſe as ſhe loved *Abelard* to Madneſs, ſo ſhe imagined every one elſe did. Beſides that Report to be ſure hath added to the Truth. It is not at all probable that a Man of *Abelard*'s Senſe, and who according to all Appearance paſſionately loved his Wife, ſhould not be able to contain himſelf in ſome Bounds, but ſhould Squander away all his Mony upon Miſtreſſes, even to the not reſerving what was ſufficient to provide for his Neceſſities. *Foulques* owns that he ſpeaks only upon Hearſay, and in that no doubt Envy and Jealouſie had their Part.

Foulques

* *Quæ conjugata, quæ Virgo non concupiſcebat abſentem, & non exardeſcebat in præſentem? Quæ Regina, vel prapotens Femina Gaudiis meis non invidebat vel Thalamis?*

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Foulques tells him beſides, that the Amputation of a part of his Body, of which he made ſuch ill Uſe, would ſuppreſs at the ſame time a great many troubleſome Paſſions, and procure him the Liberty of reflecting on himſelf, inſtead of being hurried to and fro by his Paſſions: His Meditations would be no more interrupted by the Emotions of the Fleſh, and therefore he wou'd be more ſucceſsful in diſcovering the Secrets of Nature. He reckons it as a great Advantage to him, that he would no more be the Terror of Husbands, and might now lodge any where without being ſuſpected. And forgets not to acquaint him, he might converſe with the fineſt Women without any fear of thoſe Temptations which ſometimes overpower even Age it ſelf, upon the ſight of ſuch Objects. And laſtly, he would have the Happineſs of being exempt from the Illuſions of Sleep, which Exemption, according to him, is a peculiar Bleſſing.

It was with Reaſon that *Foulques* reckons all theſe as Advantages very extraordinary in the Life of an Eccleſiaſtick; 'tis eaſie to obſerve that, to a Perſon who devotes himſelf to Continence, nothing can be more Happy than to be inſenſible to Beauty and Love; for they who cannot maintain their Chaſtity, but by continual Combats, are very unhappy: The Life of ſuch Perſons is uneaſie, their State always doubtful. They

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but too much feel the Trouble of their Warfare, and if they come off victorious in an Engagement, 'tis often with a great many Wounds. Even ſuch of them as in a retired Life are at the greateſt Diſtance from Temptations, by continually ſtruggling with their Inclinations, and ſetting Barriers againſt the Irruptions of the Fleſh, are in a miſerable Condition. Their Entrenchments are often forced; and their Conſcience fill'd with Sorrow and Anxiety. What Progreſs might one make in the ways of Virtue, who is not obliged to fight an Enemy for every foot of Gound? Had *Abelard*'s Misfortune made him indeed ſuch as *Foulques* ſuppoſed, we ſhould ſee him in his Letters expreſs his Motives of Comfort with a better Grace. But tho' he now was in a Condition not able to ſatisfie a Paſſion by which he had ſuffered ſo much, yet was he not inſenſible at the ſight of thoſe Objects which once gave him ſo much Pleaſure. This Diſcourſe therefore of *Fulbert*, far from comforting *Abelard* in his Affliction, ſeems capable of producing the contrary Effect; and it is aſtoniſhing if *Abelard* did not take it ſo, and think he rather inſulted him, and conſequently reſent it.

As to Dreams, St. *Auſtin* informs us of the Advantage *Foulques* tells his Friend he had got. St. *Auſtin* implores the Grace of God to deliver him from this ſort of Weakneſs,

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Weakneſs, and ſays he gave his Conſent to thoſe things in his Sleep which he ſhould abominate awake, and laments exceedingly ſo great a remaining Weakneſs.

But let us go on with this charitable Friend's Letter; it hath too near a Relation to this Hiſtory, to leave any part of it untouched. Matrimonial Functions (continues *Foulques*) and the Cares of a Family, will not now hinder your Application to pleaſe God. And what a Happineſs is it, not to be in a Capacity of ſinning? and then he brings the Examples of St. *Origine* and other Martyrs who rejoice now in Heaven, for their being upon Earth in the ſame Condition *Abelard* laments. As if the Impoſſibility of committing a Sin could ſecure any one from deſiring to do it. But one of his greateſt Motives of Comfort, and one upon which he inſiſts the moſt, is, becauſe his Misfortune is irreparable. This is indeed true in Fact, but the Conſequence of his Reaſoning is not ſo certain, *Afflict not your ſelf* (ſays he) *becauſe your Misfortune is of ſuch a Nature as is never to be repaired.*

It muſt be owned that the general Topicks of Conſolation have two Faces, and may therefore be conſidered very differently, even ſo as to ſeem Arguments for Sorrow. As for Inſtance, one might argue very juſtly, that a Mother ſhould not yield too

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too much to Grief upon the loſs of a Son, becauſe her Tears are unavailable, and tho' ſhe ſhould kill her ſelf with Sorrow, ſhe can never by theſe Means bring her Son to Life. Yet this very thing, that all ſhe can do is uſeleſs, is the main Occaſion of her Grief; ſhe could bear it patiently, could ſhe any way retrieve her Loſs. When *Solon* * lamented the Death of his Son, and ſome Friend by way of Comfort told him, his Tears were inſignificant, *that*, ſaid he, *is the very Reaſon why I weep.*

But *Foulques* argues much better afterwards; he ſays, *Abelard* did not ſuffer this in the Commiſſion of any ill Act, but ſleeping peaceably in his Bed. That is, he was not caught in any open Fact, ſuch as has coſt others the like Loſs. This is indeed a much better Topick than the former; though it muſt be allowed that *Abelard* had drawn this Misfortune on himſelf by a Crime as bad as Adultery; yet the Fault was over, and he had made all the Reparation which was in his Power, and when they maimed him he thought no harm to any Body.

Abelard's Friend brings other conſolatory Reaſons in his Letter, and repreſents to him after a very moving manner, the part which the Biſhop and Canons, and all the Eccleſiaſticks of *Paris*, took in his Diſgrace, and the Mourning there was among the

* *Diog. Laert.*

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the Inhabitants, and especially the Women, upon this Occasion. But in this Article of Consolation how comes it to pass that he makes no mention of *Heloise*? This ought not to appear strange; she was the most injured, and therefore questionless her Sorrows were sufficiently known to him, and it would be no News to tell the Husband that his Wife was in the utmost Affliction for him. For as we observed before, though she was in a Convent, she had not renounced her Husband, and those frequent Visits he made her were not spent in reading Homilies. But let us make an end of our Reflections on *Foulques* curious Letter. *Foulques*, after advising *Abelard* not to think of carrying the matter before the Pope, by assuring him that it required too great Expence to obtain any Satisfaction at that Court, concludes all with this last Motive of Consolation, that the imagined Happiness he had lost was always accompanied with abundance of Vexation, but if he persevered in his Spirit of Resignation, he would without doubt at the last Day obtain that Justice he had now failed of. 'Tis great Pity we have not *Abelard*'s Answer to this delicate Letter, the Matter then would look like one of *Job*'s Dialogues with his Friends. *Abelard* would generally have enough to reply, and *Foulques* would often be but a sorry Comforter. However it is certain this

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this Letter was of great weight with *Abelard*, for we find afterwards he never thought of making a Voyage to *Rome*. Reſolved to bear his Calamity patiently, he left to God the avenging of the Cruel and ſhameful Abuſe he had ſuffered.

But let us return to *Heloiſe*. 'Tis probable her Friends of the Convent of *Argenteuil* conceal'd ſo heavy a Misfortune from her for ſome Time; but at laſt ſhe heard the fatal News: Tho' the Rage and Fury of her Uncle threatned her long ſince with ſome Puniſhment, yet could ſhe never ſuſpect any thing of this Nature. It will be ſaying too little to tell the Reader ſhe felt all the Shame and Sorrow that is poſſible. She only can expreſs thoſe violent Emotions of her Soul upon ſo ſevere an Occaſion.

In all Probability this Misfortune of *Abelard* would have been a thorough Cure of her Paſſion, if we might argue from like Caſes; but there is no Rule ſo general as not to admit of ſome Exceptions; and *Heloiſe*'s Love upon this ſevere Tryal proved like Queen *Stratonice*'s, who was not leſs Paſſionate for her Favourite *Combabus* when ſhe diſcovered his Impotence, than ſhe had been before.

Shame and Sorrow had no leſs ſeiſed *Abelard* than *Heloiſe*, nor dared he ever after appear in the World. So that he reſolved, immediately upon his Cure, to baniſh

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baniſh himſelf from the ſight of Men, and hide himſelf in the Darkneſs of a Monaſtick Life; avoiding all Converſation with any kind of Perſons excepting his dear *Heloiſe*, by whoſe Company he endeavoured to comfort himſelf; but ſhe at laſt reſolved to follow his Example, and continue for ever in the Convent of *Argenteuil* where ſhe was. *Abelard* himſelf confeſſes that Shame, rather than Devotion, had made him take the Habit of a Monk; and that it was Jealouſie, more than Love, which engaged him to perſuade *Heloiſe* to be Profeſs'd before he had made his own Vow. The Letters which follow this Hiſtory will inform us after what Manner and with what Reſolution they ſeparated. *Heloiſe* in the Twenty Second Year of her Age generouſly quitted the World, and renounced all thoſe Pleaſures ſhe might reaſonably have promis'd her ſelf, to Sacrifice her ſelf entirely to the Fidelity and Obedience ſhe owed her Husband, and to procure him by that Means that Eaſe of Mind which he ſaid he could no other ways hope for.

Time making *Abelard*'s Misfortune familiar to him, he now entertain'd Thoughts of Ambition, and of ſupporting the Reputation he had gained of the moſt learned Man of the Age. He began with explaining the *Acts of the Apoſtles* to the Monks of the Monaſtery of St. *Denis*, to which he had retired; but the Diſorders of this

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this Abby, and Debauches of the Abbot, which, equally with his Dignity, were ſuperior to thoſe of the ſimple Monks, quickly drove him thence. He had made himſelf uneaſie to them, by cenſuring their Irregularity. They were glad to part with him, and he to leave them.

As ſoon as he had obtained leave of the Abbot, he retired to *Thibaud* in *Champain*, where he ſet up a School; perſuading himſelf that his Reputation would bring him a great number of Scholars. And indeed they flock'd to him, not only from the moſt diſtant Provinces of *France*, but alſo from *Rome*, *Spain*, *England* and *Germany*, in ſuch Numbers that the Towns could not provide Accommodation, nor the Country Proviſions enough for them *. But *Abelard* did not foreſee that this Succeſs and Reputation would at the ſame time occaſion him new Troubles. He had made himſelf two conſiderable Enemies at *Laon*, *Alberic* of *Rheims*, and *Lotulf* of *Lombardy*, who, as ſoon as ever they perceived how prejudicial his Reputation was to their Schools, ſought all Occaſions to ruin him; and thought they had a lucky Handle to do ſo from a Book of his entituled *the Myſtery of the Trinity*; this they pretended was Heretical, and through the Archbiſhop's Means

* *Ad quas Scholas tanta Scholarium multitudo confluxit, ut nec locus Hoſpitiis, nec terra ſufficeret Alimentis.* Abel. Oper. p. 19.

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Means they procured a Council at *Soiſons* in the Year 1121. This Council, without ſuffering *Abelard* to make any Defence, ordered his Book to be burnt by his own Hands, and himſelf to be confined to the Convent of St. *Medard*. This Sentence gave him ſuch Grief, that he ſays himſelf, the unhappy Fate of his Writings touched him more ſenſibly than the Misfortune he had ſuffered thro' *Fulbert*'s Means. 'Twas not only his fatherly Concern for his own Productions, but the indelible Mark of Hereſie which by this Means was fix'd on him, which troubled him.

That the curious Reader may have a compleat Knowledge of this Matter, I ſhall here give an Account of that pretended Hereſie which was imputed to *Abelard*. The Occaſion of his Writing this Book was, that his Scholars demanded * Philoſophical Arguments on that Subject; often urging that it was impoſſible to Believe what was not Underſtood; That it was to abuſe the World to Preach a Doctrine, equally unintelligible to the Speaker and Auditor; and that it was for *the Blind to lead the Blind*. Theſe young Men were certainly inclined to *Sabellianiſm*. *Abelard*'s Enemies however did not accuſe him of falling into this, but another Hereſie as bad, *Tritheiſm*, though indeed he was equally free

* *Humanas & philoſophicas rationes requirebant, & plus quæ intelligi, quam quæ dici poſſent efflagitabant.* Abel. Op.

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free from both; he explained the Unity of the Godhead by Comparisons drawn from Human Things, but according to a Passage of St. *Bernard* *, one of his greatest Enemies, he seemed to hold that no one ought to believe what he could not give a Reason for. However, *Abelard*'s Treatise upon this Subject pleased every one except those of his own Profession, who stung with Envy, that he should find out Explanations which they could not have thought of, raised such a cry of Heresie upon him, that he and some of his Scholars had like to have been stoned † by the Mob. By their powerful Cabals they prevailed with *Conan* Bishop of *Preneste* the Pope's Legate, who was President of the Council, to condemn his Book, pretending that he asserted three Gods, which they might easily suggest, when he was suffer'd to make no Defence. 'Tis certain he was very Orthodox in the Doctrine of the Trinity; and all this Process against him was only occasioned by the Malice of his Enemies. His Logical Comparison (and Logick was his Master-piece) proved rather the three Divine Persons One, than multiply'd the

* *Bernardi Epist.* 190.

† *Ita me in Clero & Populo diffamaverunt, ut penè me Populus paucosque qui advenerant ex Discipulis nostris prima Die nostri adventus lapidarent; dicentes me tres Deos pradicare & scripsisse, sicut ipsis persuasum fuerat.* Abel. Op. p. 20.

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Divine Nature into three. His Compariſon is, that as the three Propoſitions * in a Syllogiſm are but one Truth, ſo the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt are but one Eſſence. And 'tis certain the Inconveniences which may be drawn from this Parallel are not more than what may be drawn from the Compariſon of the three Dimenſions of Solids, ſo much inſiſted on by that famous Orthodox Mathematician Dr. *Wallis* of *England*. But great Numbers of Pious and Learned Divines, who have not been over ſubtle in Politicks, have been perſecuted and condemned as well as *Abelard*, by the Ignorance and Malice of their caballing Brethren.

A little after his Condemnation, *Abelard* was ordered to return to St. *Dennis*; the Liberty he had taken to Cenſure the vitious Lives of the Monks had raiſed him a great many Enemies. Among theſe was St. *Bernard*, not upon the ſame Motives as thoſe Monks, but becauſe *Abelard*'s great Wit, joyn'd with ſo looſe and ſenſual a Life, gave him Jealouſie, who thought it was impoſſible the Heart ſhould be defiled without the Head being likewiſe tainted.

Scarce

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* *Sicut eadem oratio eſt, propoſitio, aſſumptio & concluſio, ita eadem Eſſentia eſt Pater, Filius & Spiritus Sanctus.* Abel. Op. p. 20.

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Scarce had he returned to St. *Dennis*, when one Day he dropt ſome Words, intimating he did not believe that the St. *Dennis* their Patron was the Areopagite mentioned in the Scripture, there being no Probability that he ever was in *France*. This was immediately carry'd to the Abbot, who was full of Joy, that he had now a Handle to heighten the Accuſations of Hereſie againſt him, with ſome Crime againſt the State; a Method frequently uſed by this ſort of Gentlemen to make ſure their Revenge. In thoſe Times too the contradicting the Notions of the Monks was enough to prove a Man an Atheiſt, Heretick, Rebel, or any thing: Learning ſignify'd nothing. If any one of a clearer Head and larger Capacity had the Misfortune to be ſuſpected of Novelty, there was no way to avoid the general Perſecution of the Monks, but voluntarily baniſhing himſelf. The Abbot immediately aſſembled all the Houſe, and declared he would deliver up to the ſecular Power a Perſon who had dar'd to reflect upon the Honour of the Kingdom and of the Crown. *Abelard* very rightly judging that ſuch Threatnings were not to be deſpiſed, fled by Night to *Champain*, to a Cloiſter of the Monks of *Troies*, and there patiently waited till the Storm ſhould be over. After the Death of his Abbot, which, very luckily for him, hapned ſoon after his Flight, he obtained Leave to live

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where he pleaſed, tho' it was not without uſing ſome Cunning. He knew the Monks of ſo rich a Houſe had fallen into great Exceſſes, and therefore were very obnoxious to the Court, who would not fail to make their Profit of it, and therefore procured it ſhould be repreſented to the Council, as very Diſadvantageous to his Majeſty's Intereſt, that a Perſon who was continually cenſuring the Lives of his Brethren ſhould continue any longer with them. This was immediately underſtood, and Orders given to ſome great Man at Court to demand of the Abbot and Monks, why they kept a Perſon in their Houſe whoſe Conduct was ſo diſagreeable to them, and far from being an Ornament to the Society was a continual Vexation, by publiſhing their Faults? This being very opportunely moved to the New Abbot, he gave *Abelard* leave to retire to what Cloiſter he pleaſed.

Abelard, who had indeed all the Qualities which make a great Man, could not however bear, without repining, the numerous Misfortunes with which he ſaw himſelf embarraſs'd, and had very often Thoughts of publiſhing a Manifeſto to juſtifie himſelf from the ſcandalous Imputations his Enemies had laid upon him, and undeceive thoſe whom their Malice had prejudiced againſt him. But upon cooler Thoughts, he determined that it was better to ſay nothing, and ſhew them by his Silence how un-

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unworthy he thought them of his Anger. Thus being rather enraged than troubled at the Injuries he had ſuffered, he reſolved to found a new Society conſiſting chiefly of Monks. To this purpoſe he choſe a Solitude in the Dioceſe of *Troies*, and upon ſome Ground which was given him by Permiſſion of the Biſhop he built a little Houſe, and a Chappel, which he dedicated to the Moſt Holy Trinity.

Men of Learning were then ſcarce, and the Deſire of Science was beginning to ſpread it ſelf. Our Exile was inquired after and found, Scholars crowed to him from all Parts: They built little Huts, and were very liberal to their Maſter for his Lectures, content to live on Herbs, and Roots and Water, that they might have the Advantage of Learning from ſo Extraordinary a Man; and with great Zeal they enlarged the Chappel, building that and their Profeſſor's Houſe with Wood and Stone.

Upon this occaſion *Abelard*, to continue the Memory of the Comfort he had received in this Deſart, dedicated his New-built Chappel to the Holy Ghoſt, by the Name of the *Paraclet* or Comforter. The Envy of *Alberic* and *Lotul*, which had long ſince perſecuted him, was ſtrangely revived, upon ſeeing ſo many Scholars flock to him from all Parts, notwithſtanding the Inconveniences of the Place, and in contempt of the Maſters

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who might ſo commodiouſly have been found in the Towns and Cities.

They now more than ever ſought Occaſions to trouble him; the Name of *Paraclet* furniſh'd them with one; they gave out that this Novelty was a Conſequence of his former Hereſie, and that it was no more lawful to dedicate Churches to the Holy Ghoſt, than to God the Father. That this Title was a ſubtle Art of inſtilling that Poiſon which he durſt not ſpread openly; and a Conſequence of his Heretical Doctrine which had been condemned already by a Council. This Report raiſed a great Clamour among Numbers of People, whom his Enemies employ'd from all Sides. But the Perſecution grew more terrible when St. *Bernard* and St. *Norbert* declared againſt him, two great Zealots, fir'd with the Spirit of Reformation, and who declared themſelves Reſtorers of the Primitive Diſcipline, and had wonderfully gain'd upon the Affections of the Populace. They ſpread ſuch Scandal againſt him, that they prejudiced his Principal Friends, and forced thoſe who ſtill loved him not to ſhew it any ways, and upon theſe Accounts made his Life ſo bitter to him that he was upon the Point of leaving *Chriſtendom* *. But his Unhappineſs

* *Sæpe autem (Deus ſcit) in tantam lapſus ſum deſperationem ut Chriſtianorum finibus exceſſis, ad Gentes tranſire diſponerem, atque ibi quietè ſub quacunque tributi pactione inter inimicos Chriſti chriſtianè vivere.* Abel. Op. p. 32.

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pineſs would not let him do a thing which might have procured his Eaſe; but made him ſtill continue with Chriſtians, and with Monks (as himſelf Expreſſes it) worſe than Heathens. *

The Duke of *Britany*, informed of his Misfortunes, and of the Barbarity of his Enemies, named him to the Abby of St. *Guildas* in the Dioceſe of *Vannes*, at the deſire of the Monks, who had already elected him for their Superior. Here he thought he had found a Refuge from the Rage of his Enemies, but in Reality he had only chang'd one Trouble for another. The profligate Lives of the Monks, and the Arbitrarineſs of a Lord, who had deprived them of the greater part of their Revenues, ſo that they were obliged to maintain their Miſtreſſes and Children at their own private Expence, occaſioned him a thouſand Vexations and Dangers. They ſeveral Times endeavoured to Poiſon him in his ordinary Diet, but proving unſucceſsful that way they try'd to do it in the Holy Sacrament. Excommunications, with which he threaten'd the moſt mutinous, did not at all abate the Diſorder; he now feared the Poniard more than Poiſon, and compared his Caſe to his whom the Tyrant of *Syracuſe* cauſed to be ſeated at his Table,

* *Incidi in Chriſtianos atque Monachos Gentibus longè ſæviores atque pejores.* Ibid.

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ble, with a Sword hanging over him fasten'd only by a Thread.

Whilst *Abelard* thus suffer'd in his Abby by his Monks; the Nuns of *Argenteuil*, of whom *Heloise* was Prioress, grew so licentious that *Sugger* Abbot of St. *Dennis*, taking Advantage of their Irregularities, got Possession of their Monastery. He sent the Original Writings to *Rome*, and having obtain'd the Answer he desired, he expelled the Nuns, and establish'd in their Place Monks of his Order.

Some censorious People upon reading this Passage will be apt to entertain strong Suspicions of *Heloise*; and judge it probable that a Governor does not behave well, when Dissoluteness is known to reign in the Society. I have never read that she was included by Name in the general Scandal of the Society, and therefore am cautious not to bring any Accusations against her. Our Saviour says, *No one hath condemn'd Thee, neither do I condemn Thee.*

Heloise, at her Departure from the Convent of *Argenteuil*, apply'd to her Husband; who by Permission of the Bishop of *Troyes* gave her the House and Chappel of the *Paraclete*, with its Appendages; and placing there some Nuns, founded a Nunnery. Pope *Innocent* II. confirmed this Donation in the Year 1131. This is the Origin of the Abby of the *Paraclete*, of

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of which *Heloiſe* was the firſt Abbeſs. I ſhall not examine how ſtrict her Conduct was among the licentious Nuns of *Argenteuil*, 'tis certain ſhe lived ſo regular in this her new and laſt Retreat, and behaved her ſelf with that Prudence, Zeal and Piety, that ſhe won the Hearts of all the World, and in a ſmall time had abundance of Donations. *Abelard* himſelf ſays, ſhe had more in one Year, than he could have expected in all his Life, had he lived there. The Biſhops loved her as their Child, the Abbeſſes as their Siſter, and the World as their Mother. It muſt be owned ſome Women have had wonderful Talents for exciting Chriſtian Charity. The Abbeſſes which ſucceeded *Heloiſe* have often been of the greateſt Families in the Kingdom. There is a Liſt of them in the Notes of *Andrew du Chene* upon *Abelard*'s Works, from the time of the Foundation in 1130, to 1615, but he has not thought fit take notice of *Jane Chabot*, who dy'd the 25th of *June* 1593, and profeſs'd the Proteſtant Religion, yet without marrying, or quitting her Habit, tho' ſhe was driven from her Abby.

After *Abelard* had ſetled *Heloiſe* here, he made frequent Journeys from *Britany* to *Champain*, to take Care of the Intereſts of this riſing Houſe, and to eaſe himſelf from the Vexations of his own Abby. But Scandal ſo perpetually followed this unhappy

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Man, that tho' his preſent Condition was univerſally known, he was reproach'd with a remaining voluptuous Paſſion for his former Miſtreſs. He complains of his hard Uſage in one of his Letters; but comforts himſelf by the Example of St. *Jerom*, whoſe Friendſhip with *Paula* occaſion'd Scandal too; and thought he entirely confuted their Calumny, by remarking that even the moſt Jealous commit their Wives to the Cuſtody of Eunuchs.

The thing which gives the greateſt Handle to ſuſpect *Heloiſe*'s Prudence, and that *Abelard* did not think himſelf ſafe with her, is his making a Reſolution to ſeparate himſelf for ever from her. During his being employ'd in eſtabliſhing this new Nunnery, and in ordering their Affairs, as well Temporal as Spiritual, he was diligent in perſuading her by frequent and pious Admonitions to ſuch a Separation; and inſiſted that in order to make their Retirement and Penance more profitable, it was abſolutely Neceſſary they ſhould ſeriouſly endeavour to forget each other, and for the future think of nothing but God. When he had given her Direction for her own Conduct, and Rules for the Management of the Nunns, he took his laſt Leave of her and returned to his Abby in *Britany*, where he continu'd a long time, without her hearing any Mention of him.

By

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By chance a Letter he wrote to one of his Friends to comfort him under ſome Diſgraces, wherein he had given him a long Account of all the Perſecutions he himſelf had ſuffer'd, fell into *Heloiſe*'s Hands. She knew by the Superſcription from whom it came, and her Curioſity made her open it; the reading the Particulars of a Story ſhe was ſo much concerned in renew'd all her Paſſion, and ſhe hence took an Occaſion to write to him, complaining of his long Silence. *Abelard* could not forbear anſwering her; this occaſion'd the ſeveral Letters between them which follow this Hiſtory; and in theſe we may obſerve how high a Woman is capable of raiſing the Sentiments of her Heart, when poſſeſs'd of a great deal of Wit and Learning, as well as a moſt violent Love.

I ſhall not tire the Reader with any further Reflections on the Letters of theſe two Lovers, but leave them entirely to his own Judgment; only remarking, that he ought not to be ſurpriſed to find *Heloiſe*'s more Tender, Paſſionate and Expreſſive than thoſe of *Abelard*'s. She was Younger, and conſequently more Ardent than he; the ſad Condition he was in had not altered her Love. Beſides, ſhe retired only in Complaiſance to a Man ſhe had blindly yielded to; and endeavouring to keep her Faith inviolable, ſtrove to conquer her Deſires, and make a Virtue of Neceſſity. But the

Weakneſs

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Weakneſs of her Sex continually returned, and ſhe felt the Force of Love in ſpite of all Reſiſtance. It was not the ſame with *Abelard*; for tho' it was a Miſtake to think, that by not being in a condition of ſatiſfying his Paſſion, he was, as *Heloiſe* imagined, wholly deliver'd from the Thorn of Senſuality; yet he was truly ſorry for the Diſorders of his paſt Life, he was ſincerely Penitent, and therefore his Letters are leſs Violent and Paſſionate than thoſe of *Heloiſe*.

About Ten Years after *Abelard* had retired to his Abby, where Study was his chief Buſineſs, his Enemies, who had reſolved to Perſecute him to the laſt, were careful not to let him enjoy the Eaſe of Retirement: They thought he was not ſufficiently plagued with his Monks, and therefore brought a new Proceſs of Hereſie againſt him before the Archbiſhop of *Sens*. He deſired he might have the Liberty of defending his Doctrine before a publick Aſſembly, and it was granted him. Upon this Account the Council of *Sens* was Aſſembled, in which *Louis* the VIIth aſſiſted in Perſon, in the Year 1140. St. *Bernard* was the Accuſer, and deliver'd to the Aſſembly ſome Propoſitions drawn from *Abelard*'s Book, which were read in the Council. This Accuſation gave *Abelard* ſuch Fears, and was managed with ſuch inveterate Malice by his Enemies, and with ſuch

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ſuch great Unfairneſs in drawing Conſequences he never thought of; that imagining he had Friends at *Rome* who would protect his Innocence, he made an Appeal to the Pope. The Council, notwithſtanding his Appeal, condemn'd his Book, but did not meddle with his Perſon; and gave an Account of the whole Proceeding to Pope *Innocent* II, praying him to confirm their Sentence. St. *Bernard* had been ſo early in prepoſſeſſing the Pontiff, that he got the Sentence confirmed before *Abelard* heard any thing of it, or had any time to prefent himſelf before the Tribunal, to which he had appealed. His Holineſs ordered beſides, that *Abelard*'s Books ſhould be burnt, himſelf confined, and for ever prohibited from Teaching.

This Paſſage of St. *Bernard*'s Life is not much for the Honour of his Memory: And whether he took the Trouble himſelf to extract the condemn'd Propoſitions from *Abelard*'s Works, or intruſted it to another Hand, 'tis certain the Liſt he gave in contain'd many things which *Abelard* never wrote, and others which he did not mean in the Senſe imputed to him.

When a few particular Expreſſions are urged too rigidly, and unthought of Conſequences drawn from ſome Aſſertions, and no Regard is had to the general Intent and Scope of an Author, it is no difficult Matter to find Errors in any Book. For this

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this Reaſon *Beranger* of *Poitiers*, *Abelard*'s Scholar, defended his Maſter againſt St. *Bernard*, telling him, he ought not to Perſecute others, whoſe own Writings were not exempt from Errors; demonſtrating that he himſelf had advanced a Poſition, which he won'd not have fail'd to have inſerted in his Extract as a monſtrous Doctrine, if he had found it in the Writings of *Abelard*.

Some time after *Abelard*'s Condemnation, the Pope was appeaſed at the Solicitation of the Abbot of *Clugni*, who received this unfortunate Gentleman in his Monaſtery with great Humanity, reconcil'd him with St. *Bernard*, and admitted him to be a Religious of his Society.

This was *Abelard*'s laſt Retirement, in which he found all manner of Kindneſs; he read Lectures to the Monks, and was equally humble and laborious. At laſt growing weak, and afflicted with a Complication of Diſeaſes, he was ſent to the Priory of St. *Marcel* upon the *Saone*, near *Chalons*, a very agreeable Place, where he dy'd the 21ſt of *April*, 1142, in the 63d Year of his Age. His Corps was ſent to the Chappel of the *Paraclete*, to *Heloiſe*, to be interred, according to her former Requeſt of him, and to his own Deſire. The Abbot of *Clugni*, when he ſent the Body to *Heloiſe*, according to the Cuſtom of thoſe Times, ſent with it an Abſolution to be fix'd together

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gether with his Epitaph on his Grave-ſtone, which Abſolution was as follows.

I Peter *Abbot of* Clugni, *having received Father* Abelard *into the number of my Religious, amongſt which he departed this Life, give leave that his Body be privately conveyed to the Abby of the* Paraclete, *and given to be diſpoſed of by* Heloiſe, *Abbeſs of the ſame Abbey; which* Abelard, *I, by the Authority of God and all the Saints, abſolve from all his Sins* *.

Heloiſe, who ſurvived him twenty Years, had all the leiſure that cou'd be to effect the Cure of her unhappy Paſſion. Alas! ſhe was very long about it! She paſs'd the reſt of her Days like a Religious and Devout Abbeſs, frequent in Prayer, and entirely employed in the Regulation of her Society. She loved Study, and being a Miſtreſs of the learned Languages, the *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Hebrew*, ſhe was eſteemed a Miracle of Learning. *Abelard*, in a Letter he wrote to the Religious of his new Houſe, ſays expreſly, that *Heloiſe* underſtood theſe three Languages. The Abbot of *Clugni* likewiſe, in a Letter he wrote to

* *Ego Petrus Cluniacenſis Abbas, qui Pet. Abalardum in Monacum Cluniacenſem recepi, & corpus ejus furtim delatum Heloiſſæ Abbatiſſæ & Monialibus Paracleti conceſſi. Authoritate omnipotentis Dei & omnium Sanctorum, abſolvo eum, pro officio ab omnibus peccatis ſuis.*

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to her, tells her, she excell'd in Learning not only all her Sex, but the greatest part of Men †. And in the Calender of the House of the *Paraclete*, she is recorded in these words: *Heloise, Mother and first Abbess of this Place, famous for her Learning and Religion.* I must not here pass by a Custom the Religious of the *Paraclete* now have to commemorate how learned their first Abbess was in the *Greek*, which is, that every Year on the Day of Pentecost they perform Divine Service in the *Greek* Tongue. What a ridiculous Vanity!

Francis D'Amboise tells us, how subtilly one Day she satisfy'd St. *Bernard*, upon his asking her, why in her Abby, when they recited the Lord's Prayer, they did not say, *Give us this Day our* DAILY *Bread*, but *Give us this Day our* SUPERSUBSTANTIAL *Bread*, by an Argument drawn from the Originals, affirming we ought to follow the *Greek* Version of the Gospel St. *Matthew* wrote in *Hebrew*. Without doubt it was not a little surprizing to St. *Bernard*, to hear a Woman pose him in a Controversie, by citing a *Greek* Text. 'Tis true, some Authors say *Abelard* made this Answer to St. *Bernard*, after hearing from *Heloise*, that Objections were made to that Form of Prayer. However she

† *Studio tuo & Mulieres muses evicisti, & pene viros universos Superasti.* Abel. Op.

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the Caſe was, a Woman with a ſmall competency of Learning, might, in thoſe times, paſs for a Miracle; and tho' ſhe might not equal thoſe Deſcriptions which have been given of her, yet ſhe may deſervedly be placed in the Rank of Women of the greateſt Learning. Nor was ſhe leſs remarkable for her Piety, Patience, and Reſignation, during her Sicknesſes in the latter part of her Life. She dy'd the 17th of *May*, 1163. 'Tis ſaid ſhe deſired to be buried in the ſame Tomb with her *Abelard*, tho' that probably was not executed. *Francis D' Amboiſe* ſays, he ſaw at the Convent the Tombs of the Founder and Foundreſs near together. However, a Manuſcript of *Tours* gives us an Account of an extraordinary Miracle which happened when *Abelard*'s Grave was opened for *Heloiſe*'s Body, namely, that *Abelard* ſtretched out his Arms to receive her, and embraced her cloſely; tho' there were twenty good Years paſs'd ſince he dy'd. But that is a ſmall matter to a Writer of Miracles.

I ſhall conclude this Hiſtory with an Epitaph on *Abelard*, which the Abbot of *Cluni* ſent *Heloiſe*, and is now to be read on his Tomb; it hath nothing in it delicate either for Thought or Language, and will ſcarcely bear a Tranſlation. It is only added here for the ſake of the Curious, and as an Inſtance of the Reſpect paid to the Memory of ſo great a Man, and one whom Envy

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Envy had loaded with the greateſt Defamations.

PEtrus in hac petra latitat, quem mundus Homerum
Clamabat, ſed jam ſidera ſidus habent.
Sol erat hic Gallis, ſed eum jam fata tulerunt:
Ergo caret Regio, Gallica ſole ſuo.
Ille ſciens quid quid ulli ſcibile, vicit
Artifices, artes abſque docente docens.
Undecima Maij Petrum rapuere Calendæ
Privantes Logices atria Rege ſuo.
Eſt ſatis, in tumulo Petrus hic jacet Abalardus,
Cui ſoli patuit ſcibile quid quid erat.

GAllorum Socrates, Plato maximus Heſperiarum
Noſter Ariſtoteles, Logicis (quicunquè fuerunt)
Aut par aut melior; ſtudiorum cognitus Orbi
Princeps, ingenio varius, ſubtilis & acer,
Omnia vi ſuperans rationis & arte loquendi,
Abalardus erat. Sed nunc magis omnia vincis,
Cum Cluniacenſem Monacum moremque profeſſus,
Ad Chriſti veram tranſivit Philoſophiam,
In qua longæva bene completa ultima vita,
Philoſophis quandoquè bonis ſe connumerandum
Spem dedit, undenas Maïo renovante Calendas.

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LETTERS

OF

ABELARD

AND

HELOISE.

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LETTER I.

Abelard to *Philintus.*

It may be proper to acquaint the Reader that the following Letter was written by Abelard *to a Friend, to comfort him under some Afflictions which had befallen him, by a Recital of his own Sufferings, which had been much heavier. It contains a particular Account of his Amour with* Heloise, *and the unhappy Consequences of it. This Letter was written several Years after* Abelard's *Separation from* Heloise.

THE last time we were together, *Philintus*, you gave me a melancholy Account of your Misfortunes; I was sensibly touched with the Relation, and like a true Friend bore a Share in your Griefs. What did I not say to stop your

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your Tears? I laid before you all the Reasons Philosophy could furnish, which I thought might any ways soften the Strokes of Fortune: But all these Endeavours have proved useless: Grief I perceive has wholly seised your Spirits, and your Prudence, far from assisting, seems quite to have forsaken you. But my skilful Friendship has found out an Expedient to relieve you. Attend to me a Moment, hear but the Story of my Misfortunes; and yours, *Philintus*, will be nothing, if you compare them with those of the Loving and Unhappy *Abelard*. Observe, I beseech you, at what Expence I endeavour to serve you; and think this no small Mark of my Affection; for I am going to present you with the Relation of such Particulars as it is impossible for me to recollect without piercing my Heart with the most sensible Affliction.

You know the Place where I was born, but not perhaps that I was born with those complexional Faults which Strangers charge upon our Nation, an extreme Lightness of Temper, and great Inconstancy. I frankly own it, and shall be as free to acquaint you with those good Qualities which were observed in me. I had a natural Vivacity and Aptness for all the Polite Arts. My Father

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Father was a Gentleman, and a Man of good Parts; he loved the Wars paſſionately, but differ'd in his Sentiments from many who follow that Profeſſion. He thought it no Praiſe to be illiterate; but in the Camp he knew how to converſe at the ſame time with the Muſes and *Bellona*. He was the ſame in the Management of his Family, and took equal Care to form his Children to the Study of Polite Learning, as to their Military Exerciſes. I was his eldeſt and conſequently his favourite Son. I had a natural Genius to Study, and made an extraordinary Progreſs in it. Smitten with the Praiſes which on all Sides were given me, I aſpired to no Reputation, but what proceeded from Learning. To my Brothers I left the pomp of Triumphs, and the glory of Battels; nay more, I yielded them up my Birthright and Patrimony. I knew Neceſſity was the great Spur to Study, and was affraid I ſhould not merit the Title of Learned, if I diſtinguiſhed my ſelf from others by nothing but a more plentiful Fortune. Of all the Parts of Philoſophy none was more to my Taſte than Logick; armed with its Weapons of reaſoning I took a Pleaſure to go to publick Diſputations, and win Trophies, and like ano-

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another *Alexander* I rang'd from Province to Province to ſeek for new Enemies, with whom I might try my Strength.

The Ambition I had to become formidable in Logick led me at laſt to *Paris*, the Center of Politeneſs, and where the Science I was ſo ſmitten with had its Birth. I put my ſelf under the Direction of one *Champeaux* a Profeſſor, who had acquired the Character of the moſt skilful Philoſopher of his Age, by negative Excellencies only, by being the leaſt Ignorant. He received me with great Demonſtrations of Kindneſs, but I was not ſo Happy as to pleaſe him long: I was too knowing in the Subjects he diſcourſed upon; I often confuted his Notions; often in our Diſputations I puſh'd a good Argument ſo home, that all his Subtilty was not able to elude its Force. It was impoſſible he ſhould ſee himſelf ſurpaſſed by his Scholar without: It is ſometimes dangerous to have too much Merit.

Envy increaſed againſt me proportionably to my Reputation. My Enemies endeavoured to interrupt my Progreſs, but their Malice only provok'd my Courage. And meaſuring my Abilities by the Jealouſie I had raiſed, I thought I had no farther Occaſion

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ſion for *Champeaux*'s Lectures, but rather that I was ſufficiently qualified to read to others. I ſtood for a Place which was Vacant at *Melun*. My Maſter uſed all his Artifice to defeat my Hopes, but in vain; and on this Occaſion, I triumphed over his Cunning, as before I had done over his Learning. My Lectures were always crouded, and my Beginnings ſo fortunate, that I entirely obſcured the Renown of my famous Maſter. Fluſhed with theſe happy Conqueſts, I removed to *Corbeil*, to attack the Maſters there, and ſo eſtabliſh my Character of the ableſt Logician. The Violence of Travelling threw me into a dangerous Diſtemper, and not being able to recover my Strength, my Phyſicians, who perhaps were in a League with *Champeaux*, adviſed me to remove to my Native Air. Thus I voluntarily baniſhed my ſelf for ſome Years. I leave you to imagine whether my Abſence was not regretted by the better Sort. At length I recover'd my Health, when I received News that my greateſt Adverſary had taken the Habit of a Monk; you may think it was an Act of Penitence for having perſecuted me; quite contrary, 'twas Ambition; he reſolved to raiſe himſelf to ſome Church Dignity, therefore fell into

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the beaten Track, and took on him the Garb of feign'd Auſterity; for this is the eaſieſt and ſhorteſt way to the higheſt Eccleſiaſtical Dignities. His Wiſhes were ſucceſsful, and he obtain'd a Biſhoprick: Yet did he not quit *Paris*, and the Care of the Schools: He went to his Dioceſe to gather in his Revenues, but return'd and paſs'd the reſt of his time in reading Lectures to thoſe few Pupils which followed him. After this I often engaged with him, and may reply to you as *Ajax* did to the *Greeks*;

If you demand the Fortune of that Day
When ſtak'd on this right Hand your Honours lay,
If I did not oblige the Foe to yield,
Yet did I never baſely quit the Field.

About this time my Father *Beranger*, who to the Age of ſixty had lived very agreeably, retired from the World, and ſhut himſelf up in a Cloiſter, where he offer'd up to Heaven the languid Remains of a Life, he could make no further uſe of. My Mother, who was yet young, took the ſame Reſolution. She turn'd a Religious, but did not entirely abandon the Satisfactions of Life. Her Friends were continually at the Grate. And the Monaſtery, when one has an Inclination

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clination to make it ſo, is exceeding Charming and Pleaſant. I was preſent when my Mother was profeſs'd. At my Return I reſolv'd to ſtudy Divinity, and inquired for a Director in that Study. I was recommended to one *Anſelm*, the very Oracle of his Time; but to give you my own Opinion, one more venerable for his Age and Wrinkles, than for his Genius or Learning. If you conſulted him upon any Difficulty, the ſure Conſequence was to be much more uncertain in the Point. They who only ſaw him admir'd him, but thoſe who reaſon'd with him were extreamly diſſatisfied. He was a great Maſter of Words, and talk'd much, but meant nothing. His Diſcourſe was a Fire, which inſtead of enlightning obſcured every thing with its Smoke; a Tree beautified with Variety of Leaves and Branches, but barren. I came to him with a deſire to Learn, but found him like the Fig-tree in the Goſpel, or the old Oak to which *Lucan* compares *Pompey*. I continued not long underneath his Shadow. I took for my Guides the Primitive Fathers, and boldly launch'd into the Ocean of the Holy Scriptures. In a ſhort time I made ſuch a Progreſs that others choſe me for their Director. The

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Number of my Scholars was incredible, and the Gratuities I received from them were anſwerable to the great Reputation I had acquired. Now I found my ſelf ſafe in the Harbour, the Storms were paſs'd, and the Rage of my Enemies had ſpent it ſelf without Effect. Happy, had I known to make a right Uſe of this Calm! But when the Mind is moſt eaſie 'tis moſt expos'd to Love, and even Security here is the moſt dangerous State.

And now, my Friend, I am going to expoſe to you all my Weakneſſes. All Men, I believe, are under a Neceſſity of paying Tribute, at ſome Time or other, to Love, and it is vain to ſtrive to avoid it. I was a Philoſopher, yet this Tyrant of the Mind triumph'd over all my Wiſdom; his Darts were of greater Force than all my Reaſonings, and with a ſweet Conſtraint he led me whither he pleas'd. Heav'n, amidſt an abundance of Bleſſings with which I was intoxicated, threw in a heavy Affliction. I became a moſt ſignal Example of its Vengeance; and the more unhappy, becauſe having deprived me of the Means of accompliſhing my Satisfaction, it left me to the Fury of my Criminal Deſires. I will tell you, my dear Friend, the Particulars

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lars of my Story, and leave you to judge whether I deſerved ſo ſevere a Correction.

I had always an Averſion for thoſe light Women, whom 'tis a Reproach to purſue; I was ambitious in my Choice, and wiſh'd to find ſome Obſtacles, that I might ſurmount them with the greater Glory and Pleaſure.

There was in *Paris* a young Creature (ah *Philintus*!) formed in a Prodigality of Nature, to ſhew Mankind a finiſh'd Compoſition; dear *Heloiſe!* the reputed Neice of one *Fulbert*, a Canon. Her Wit and her Beauty would have fir'd the dulleſt and moſt inſenſible Heart; and her Education was equally admirable. *Heloiſe* was a Miſtreſs of the moſt Polite Arts. You may eaſily imagine, that this did not a little help to captivate me: I ſaw her, I lov'd her, I reſolv'd to endeavour to engage her Affections. The Thirſt of Glory cool'd immediately in my Heart, and all my Paſſions were loſt in this new one. I thought of nothing but *Heloiſe*; every thing brought her Image to my Mind. I was penſive, reſtleſs, and my Paſſion was ſo violent as to admit of no Reſtraint. I was always vain and preſumptive; I flatter'd my ſelf

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already with the moſt bewitching Hopes. My Reputation had ſpread it ſelf every where; and cou'd a Virtuous Lady reſiſt a Man that had confounded all the Learned of the Age? I was young — cou'd ſhe ſhew an Inſenſibility to thoſe Vows which my Heart never formed for any but her ſelf? My Perſon was advantageous enough, and by my Dreſs no one would have ſuſpected me for a Doctor; and Dreſs, you know, is not a little engaging with Women. Beſides, I had Wit enough to write a *Billets-doux*, and hoped, if ever ſhe permitted my abſent ſelf to entertain her, ſhe would read with Pleaſure thoſe Breathings of my Heart.

Fill'd with theſe Notions, I thought of nothing but the Means to ſpeak to her. Lovers either find or make all things eaſie. By the Offices of common Friends, I gain'd the Acquaintance of *Fulbert*. And can you believe it, *Philintus*, he allow'd me the Privilege of his Table, and an Appartment in his Houſe: I paid him indeed a conſiderable Sum, for Perſons of his Character do nothing without Mony. But what would I not have given? You, my dear Friend, know what Love is; imagine then what a Pleaſure it muſt have been to a Heart ſo in-

flam'd

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flam'd as mine, to be always so near the dear Object of Desire! I wou'd not have exchang'd my happy Condition for that of the greatest Monarch upon Earth. I saw *Heloise*, I spoke to her,——each Action, each confused Look, told her the Trouble of my Soul. And she, on the other side, gave me ground to hope for every thing from her Generosity. *Fulbert* desir'd me to instruct her in Philosophy; by this means I found Opportunities of being in private with her, and yet I was sure of all Men the most timorous in declaring my Passion.

As I was with her one Day alone, Charming *Heloise*, said I blushing, if you know your self, you will not be surprized with that Passion you have inspired me with. Uncommon as it is, I can express it but with the common Terms —I love you, adorable *Heloise*! 'Till now I thought Philosophy made us Masters of all our Passions, and that it was a Refuge from the Storms in which weak Mortals are toss'd and shipwreck'd: But you have destroy'd my Security, and broken this Philosophic Courage. I have despis'd Riches; Honour and its Pageantries could never raise a weak Thought in me: Beauty alone has fir'd my Soul; happy if she who raised this Passion, kindly

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receives the Declaration; but if it is an Offence — No, replied *Heloiſe*; ſhe muſt be very ignorant of your Merit, who can be offended at your Paſſion. But for my own Repoſe, I wiſh either that you had not made this Declaration, or that I were at liberty not to ſuſpect your Sincerity. Ah Divine *Heloiſe*, ſaid I, flinging my ſelf at her Feet, I ſwear by your ſelf — I was going on to convince her of the Truth of my Paſſion, but heard a Noiſe, and it was *Fulbert*: There was no avoiding it, but I muſt do a violence to my Deſire, and change the Diſcourſe to ſome other Subject. After this, I found frequent Opportunities to free *Heloiſe* from thoſe Suſpicions, which the general Inſincerity of Men had raiſed in her; and ſhe too much deſired what I ſaid were Truth, not to believe it. Thus there was a moſt happy Underſtanding between us. The ſame Houſe, the ſame Love, united our Perſons and our Deſires. How many ſoft Moments did we paſs together? We took all Opportunities to expreſs to each other our mutual Affections, and were ingenious in contriving Incidents which might give us a plauſible Occaſion of meeting. *Pyramis* and *Thisbe*'s Diſcovery of the Crack in the Wall, was but a ſlight Repreſentation

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tion of our Love, and its Sagacity. In the dead of Night, when *Fulbert* and his Domesticks were in a sound Sleep, we improved the time, proper to the sweet Thefts of Love: Not contenting our selves, like those unfortunate Lovers, with giving insipid Kisses to a Wall, we made use of all the Moments of our charming Interviews. In the Place where we met we had no Lions to fear, and the Study of Philosophy serv'd us for a Blind. But I was so far from making any Advances in the Sciences, that I lost all my Taste of them; and when I was obliged to go from the Sight of my dear Mistress to my Philosophical Exercises, 'twas with the utmost Regret and Melancholy. Love is impossible to be concealed; a Word, a Look, nay Silence speaks it. My Scholars discover'd it first; they saw I had no longer that Vivacity of Thought to which all things were easie: I could now do nothing but write Verses to sooth my Passion: I quitted *Aristotle* and his dry Maxims, to practise the Precepts of the more ingenious *Ovid*. No Day pass'd in which I did not compose Amorous Verses. Love was my inspiring *Apollo*. My Songs were spread abroad, and gained me frequent Applauses. Those who were in Love as

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I was, took a Pride in learning them; and by luckily applying my Thoughts and Verſes, have obtain'd Favours, which perhaps they cou'd not otherwiſe have gained: This gave our Amours ſuch an *Eclat*, that the Loves of *Heloiſe* and *Abelard* were the Subject of all Converſations.

The Town-talk at laſt reach'd *Fulbert*'s Ears; it was with great difficulty he gave Credit to what he heard, for he loved his Neice, and was prejudiced in my Favour; but upon a cloſer Examination, he began to be leſs incredulous. He ſurpriſed us in one of our more ſoft Converſations. How fatal ſometimes are the Conſequences of Curioſity! The Anger of *Fulbert* ſeemed too moderate on this Occaſion, and I fear'd in the End ſome more heavy Revenge. It is impoſſible to expreſs the Grief and Regret which fill'd my Soul, when I was obliged to leave the Canon's Houſe and my dear *Heloiſe*. But this Separation of our Perſons, the more firmly united our Minds; and the deſperate Condition we were reduced to, made us capable of attempting any thing.

My Intrigues gave me but little Shame, ſo lovely did I eſteem the Occaſion: Think what the gay young Divinities ſaid, when

Vulcan

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Vulcan caught *Mars* and the Goddeſs of Beauty in his Net, and impute it all to me. *Fulbert* ſurpriz'd me with *Heloiſe*, and what Man that had a Soul in him would not have born any Ignominy on the ſame conditions? The next Day I provided my ſelf of a private Lodging near the lov'd Houſe, being reſolv'd not to abandon my Prey. I continued ſome time without appearing publickly. Ah how long did thoſe few Moments ſeem to me! When we fall from a State of Happineſs, with what Impatience do we bear our Misfortunes?

It being impoſſible that I could live without ſeeing *Heloiſe*, I endeavoured to engage her Servant, whoſe Name was *Agaton*, in my Intereſt; ſhe was brown, well ſhaped, of a Perſon ſuperior to the ordinary Rank; her Features regular, and her Eyes ſparkling; fit to raiſe Love in any Man whoſe Heart was not prepoſſeſs'd by another Paſſion. I met her alone, and intreated her to have Pity on a Diſtreſs'd Lover. She anſwered, ſhe would undertake any thing to ſerve me, but there was a Reward — at theſe words I open'd my Purſe, and ſhew'd the ſhining Metal, which lays aſleep Guards, forces a Way thro' Rocks, and ſoftens the Hearts of the moſt obdurate Fair. You are miſtaken,

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miſtaken, ſaid ſhe, ſmiling and ſhaking her Head — you do not know me; could Gold tempt me, a Rich Abbot takes his nightly Station, and ſings under my Window; he offers to ſend me to his Abby, which, he ſays, is ſituate in the moſt pleaſant Country in the World. A Courtier offers me a conſiderable Sum, and aſſures me I need have no Apprehenſions; for if our Enjoyments have Conſequences, he will marry me to his Gentleman, and give him a handſome Employment. To ſay nothing of a young Officer, who patroles about here every Night, and makes his Attacks after all imaginable Forms. It muſt be Love only which could oblige him to follow me; for I have not, like your great Ladies, any Rings or Jewels to tempt him: Yet during all his Siege of Love, his Feather and his embroider'd Coat have not made any Breach in my Heart: I ſhall not quickly be brought to capitulate, I am too faithful to my firſt Conqueror — and then ſhe look'd earneſtly on me. I anſwer'd, I did not underſtand her Diſcourſe. She replied, For a Man of Senſe and Gallantry, you have a very ſlow Apprehenſion; I am in Love with you, *Abelard*; I know you adore *Heloiſe*, I do not blame you; I deſire only to enjoy the

the ſecond Place in your Affections: I have a tender Heart, as well as my Miſtreſs; you may without difficulty make Returns to my Paſſion; do not perplex your ſelf with unfaſhionable Scruples: A Prudent Man ought to love ſeveral at the ſame time; if one ſhou'd fail, he is not then left unprovided.

You cannot imagine, *Philintus*, how much I was ſurpriz'd at theſe words; ſo entirely did I love *Heloiſe*, that without reflecting whether *Agaton* ſpoke any thing reaſonable or not, I immediately left her. When I had gone a little way from her, I look'd back, and ſaw her biting her Nails in the Rage of Diſappointment, which made me fear ſome fatal Conſequences. She haſten'd to *Fulbert*, and told him the Offer I had made her, but I ſuppoſe concealed the other part of the Story. The Canon never forgave this Affront; I afterwards perceived he was more deeply concern'd for his Neice, than I at firſt imagin'd. Let no Lover hereafter follow my Example: A Woman rejected is an outrageous Creature. *Agaton* was Day and Night at her Window, on purpoſe to keep me at a diſtance from her Miſtreſs, and ſo gave her own Gallants opportunity enough to diſplay their ſeveral Abilities.

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I was infinitely perplexed what course to take, at last I apply'd my self to my *Heloise*'s Singing-master. The shining Metal, which had no Effect on *Agaton*, charmed him; he was excellently qualified for conveying a Billet, with the greatest Dexterity and Secresie. He deliver'd one of mine to *Heloise*, who, according to my Appointment, was ready at the end of a Garden, the Wall of which I scaled by a Ladder of Ropes. I confess to you all my Failings, *Philintus*. How would my Enemies, *Champeaux* and *Anselm*, have triumphed, had they seen the redoubted Philosopher in such a wretched Condition? Well — I met my Soul's Joy, my *Heloise*; I shall not describe our Transports, they were not long; for the first News *Heloise* acquainted me with, plunged me in a thousand Distractions. A floating *Delos* was to be sought for, where she might be safely delivered of a Burthen she began already to feel. Without losing much time in debating, I made her presently quit the Canon's House, and at break of Day depart for *Britany*; where she, like another Goddess, gave the World another *Apollo*, which my Sister took care of.

This

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This carrying off *Heloiſe* was ſufficient Revenge upon *Fulbert*. It fill'd him with the deepeſt Concern, and had like to have deprived him of all that little Share of Wit which Heaven had allowed him. His Sorrow and Lamentation gave the Cenſorious an Occaſion of ſuſpecting him for ſomething more than the Uncle of *Heloiſe*.

In ſhort, I began to pity his Misfortune, and to think this Robbery which Love had made me commit was a ſort of Treaſon. I endeavoured to appeaſe his Anger by a ſincere Confeſſion of all that was paſt, and by hearty Engagements to marry *Heloiſe* ſecretly. He gave me his Conſent, and with many Proteſtations and Embraces confirmed our Reconciliation. But what Dependence can be made on the Word of an ignorant *Devotée*. He was only plotting a cruel Revenge, as you will ſee by what follows.

I took a Journey into *Britany*, in order to bring back my dear *Heloiſe*, whom I now conſider'd as my Wife. When I had acquainted her with what had paſs'd between the Canon and me, I found ſhe was of a contrary Opinion to me. She urged all that was poſſible to divert me from Marriage: That it was a Bond always fatal

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to a Philoſopher; that the Cries of Children and Cares of a Family were utterly inconſiſtent with the Tranquility and Application which the Study of Philoſophy required. She quoted to me all that was written on the Subject by *Theophraſtus*, *Cicero*, and above all inſiſted on the Unfortunate *Socrates*, who quitted Life with Joy, becauſe by that Means he left *Xantippe*. Will it not be more agreeable to me, ſaid ſhe, to ſee my ſelf your Miſtreſs than your Wife? And will not Love have more Power than Marriage to keep our Hearts firmly united? Pleaſures taſted ſparingly and with Difficulty have always a higher Reliſh, while every thing by being eaſie and common grows flat and inſipid.

I was unmoved by all this Reaſoning. *Heloiſe* prevailed upon my Siſter to engage me. *Lucilia* (for that was her Name) taking me aſide one Day ſaid, What do you intend, Brother? Is it poſſible that *Abelard* ſhould in earneſt think of marrying *Heloiſe*? She ſeems indeed to deſerve a perpetual Affection; Beauty, Youth and Learning, all that can make a Perſon valuable, meet in her. You may adore all this if you pleaſe; but not to flatter you, What is Beauty but a Flower, which may be

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be blaſted by the leaſt fit of Sickneſs? When thoſe Features with which you have been ſo captivated ſhall be ſunk, and thoſe Graces loſt, you will too late repent that you have entangled your ſelf in a Chain, from which Death only can free you. I ſhall ſee you reduced to the marryed Man's only Hope of Survivorſhip. Do you think Learning ought to make *Heloiſe* more amiable? I know ſhe is not one of thoſe affected Females, who are continually oppreſſing you with fine Speeches, criticiſing Books, and deciding upon the Merit of Authors. When ſuch a one is in the Fury of her Diſcourſe, Husband, Friends, Servants, all fly before her. *Heloiſe* has not this Fault; yet 'tis Troubleſome not be at Liberty to uſe the leaſt improper Expreſſion before a Wife, which you bear with Pleaſure from a Miſtreſs.

But you ſay you are ſure of the Affections of *Heloiſe*; I believe it; ſhe has given you no ordinary Proofs. But can you be ſure Marriage will not be the Tomb of her Love? The Name of Husband and Maſter are always harſh, and *Heloiſe* will not be the *Phœnix* you now think her. Will ſhe not be a Woman? Come, come, the Head of a Philoſopher is leſs ſecure than

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than thoſe of other Men. My Siſter grew warm in the Argument, and was going on to give me a hundred more Reaſons of this kind; but I angrily interrupted her, telling her only, that ſhe did not know *Heloiſe*.

A few Days after we departed together from *Britany*, and came to *Paris*, where I compleated my Project. 'Twas my Intent my Marriage ſhould be kept ſecret, and therefore *Heloiſe* retired among the Nuns of *Argenteuil*.

I now thought *Fulbert*'s Anger diſarmed; I lived in Peace; but alas! our Marriage proved but a weak Defence againſt his Revenge. Obſerve, *Philintus*, to what a Barbarity he purſu'd it! He bribed my Servants; an Aſſaſſin came into my Bed-chamber by Night with a Razor in his Hand, and found me in a deep Sleep. I ſuffer'd the moſt ſhameful Puniſhment that the Revenge of an Enemy could invent; in ſhort, without loſing my Life, I loſt my Manhood. I was puniſhed indeed in the offending Part; the Deſire was left me, but not the Poſſibility of ſatifying the Paſſion. So cruel an Action eſcaped not unpuniſhed; the Villain ſuffer'd the ſame Infliction; poor Comfort for ſo irretrievable an Evil! I confeſs to you, Shame more than any ſincere Penitence

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tence made me resolve to hide my self from the sight of Men, yet could I not separate my self from my *Heloise*. Jealousie took Possession of my Mind; and at the very Expence of her Happiness I decreed to disappoint all Rivals: Before I put my self in a Cloister, I obliged her to take the Habit, and retire into the Nunnery of *Argenteuil*. I remember some Body would have opposed her making such a cruel Sacrifice of her self, but she answered in the Words of *Cornelia* after the Death of *Pompey* the Great,

—— O Conjux, ego te scelerata peremi.
—— te fata extrema petente
Vita digna fui? Moriar——&c.

O my lov'd Lord! our fatal Marriage draws
On thee this Doom, and I the guilty Cause!
Then while thou go'st th' Extremes of Fate to prove,
I'll share that Fate, and expiate thus my Love.

Speaking these Verses, she marched up to the Altar, and took the Veil with a Constancy which I cou'd not have expected in a Woman who had so high a Taste of Pleasures which she might still enjoy. I blushed at my own Weakness, and without

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out deliberating a Moment longer, I buried my ſelf in a Cloiſter, reſolved to vanquiſh a fruitleſs Paſſion. I now reflected that God had chaſtiſed me thus grievouſly, that he might ſave me from that Deſtruction in which I had like to have been ſwallowed up. In order to avoid Idleneſs, the unhappy Incendiary of thoſe criminal Flames which had ruined me in the World, I endeavoured in my Retirement to put thoſe Talents to a good Uſe which I had before ſo much abuſed. I gave the Novices Rules of Divinity, agreeable to the Holy Fathers and Councils. In the mean while the Enemies which my new Fame had raiſed up, and eſpecially *Alberic* and *Lotulf*, who, after the Death of their Maſters *Champeaux* and *Anſelm*, aſſumed the Sovereignty of Learning, began to attack me. They loaded me with the falſeſt Imputations, and notwithſtanding all my Defence, I had the Mortification to ſee my Books condemn'd by a Council and burnt. This was a cutting Sorrow; and believe me, *Philintus*, the former Calamity I ſuffer'd by the Cruelty of *Fulbert* was nothing in Compariſon to this.

The Affront I had newly received, and the ſcandalous Debaucheries of the Monks, obliged

obliged me to baniſh my ſelf, and retire near to *Nogent*. I lived in a Deſart, where I flatter'd my ſelf I ſhould avoid Fame, and be ſecure from the Malice of my Enemies. I was again deceived. The Deſire of being taught by me drew Crouds of Auditors even thither. Many left the Towns and their Houſes, and came and lived in Tents; for Herbs, Courſe Fare, and hard Lodging, they abandoned the Delicacies of a plentiful Table, and eaſie Life. I looked like the Prophet in the Wilderneſs attended by his Diſciples. My Lectures were perfectly clear from all that had been condemn'd. And happy had it been if our Solitude had been innaceſſible to Envy! With the conſiderable Gratuities I received, I built a Chappel, and dedicated it to the Holy Ghoſt, by Name of the *Paraclete*. The Rage of my Enemies now awakened again, and forced me to quit this Retreat. This I did without much Difficulty. But firſt the Biſhop of *Troies* gave me leave to eſtabliſh there a Nunnery, which I did, and committed the Care of it my dear *Heloiſe*. When I had ſetled her here, can you believe it, *Philintus*, I left her, without taking any leave. I did not wander long without any ſetled Habitation; for the Duke of *Britany*, informed

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informed of my Misfortunes, named me to the Abby of St. *Guildas*, where I now am, and where I ſuffer every Day freſh Perſecutions.

I live in a barbarous Country, the Language of which I don't underſtand; I have no Converſation but with the rudeſt People. My Walks are on the innacceſſible Shore of a Sea, which is perpetually Stormy. My Monks are only known by their Diſſoluteneſs, and living without any Rule or Order. Could you ſee the Abby, *Philintus*, you would not call it one. The Doors and Walls are without any Ornament, except the Heads of wild Boars and Hinds Feet, which are nail'd up againſt them, and the Hides of frightful Animals. The Cells are hung with the Skins of Deer. The Monks have not ſo much as a Bell to wake them, the Cocks and Dogs ſupply that Defect. In ſhort, they paſs their whole Days in Hunting; would to Heaven that were their greateſt Fault! or that their Pleaſures terminated there! I endeavour in vain to recal them to their Duty; they all combine againſt me, and I only expoſe my ſelf to continual Vexations and Dangers. I imagine I ſee every Moment a naked Sword hang over my Head. Sometimes they ſurround

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round me, and load me with infinite Abuſes; ſometimes they abandon me, and I am left alone to my own tormenting Thoughts. I make it my Endeavour to merit by my Sufferings, and to appeaſe an angry God. Sometimes I grieve for my Loſs of the Houſe of the *Paraclete*, and wiſh to ſee it again. Ah *Philintus*, does not the Love of *Heloiſe* ſtill burn in my Heart? I have not yet triumphed over that unhappy Paſſion. In the midſt of my Retirement I ſigh, I weep, I pine, I ſpeak the dear Name *Heloiſe*, and am pleas'd to hear the Sound. I complain of the Severity of Heaven. But oh! let us not deceive our ſelves; I have not made a right uſe of Grace. I am thoroughly wretched. I have not yet torn from my Heart the deep Roots which Vice has planted in it. For if my Converſion were ſincere, how could I take a Pleaſure to relate my paſt Follies? Could I not more eaſily comfort my ſelf in my Afflictions, could I not turn to my Advantage thoſe words of God himſelf, *if they have perſecuted me they will alſo perſecute you, if the World hate you, ye know that it hated me alſo*? Come *Philintus*, let us make a ſtrong Effort, turn our Misfortunes to our Advantage,

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vantage, make them meritorious, or at leaſt wipe out our Offences; let us receive without Murmuring what comes from the Hand of God, and let us not oppoſe our Will to his, Adieu. I give you Advice which could I my ſelf follow I ſhould be Happy.

LETTER

LETTER II.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

The foregoing Letter would probably not have produced any others, if it had been deliver'd to the Perſon to whom it was directed; but falling by accident into Heloiſe's *Hands, who knew the Character, ſhe open'd it and read it; and by that means, her former Paſſion being awaken'd, ſhe immediately ſet her ſelf to write to her Husband, as follows.*

* To her Lord, her Father, her Husband, her Brother; his Servant, his Child, his Wife, his Siſter, and to expreſs all that is Humble, Reſpectful, and Loving, to her *Abelard*, *Heloiſe* writes this.

A Conſolatory Letter of yours to a Friend, happen'd ſome Days ſince to fall into my Hands; my Knowledge of the Character, and my Love of the Hand, ſoon gave me the Curioſity to

* *Domino ſuo, imo Patri; Conjugi ſuo, imo fratri; Ancilla ſua, imo filia; ipſius Uxor, imo Soror; Abalardo Heloiſſa*, &c. Abel. Oper.

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open it: In Juſtification of the Liberty I took, I flatter'd my ſelf I might claim a Sovereign Privilege over every Thing which came from you: Nor was I ſcrupulous to break through the Rules of good Breeding, when it was to hear News of *Abelard*: But how dear did my Curioſity coſt me? What Diſturbance did it occaſion? And how was I ſurpriſed to find the whole Letter fill'd with a particular and melancholy Account of our Misfortunes? I met with my Name a hundred Times; I never ſaw it without Fear; ſome heavy Calamity always followed it: I ſaw yours too, equally unhappy. Theſe mournful, but dear Remembrances, put my Spirits into ſuch a violent Motion, that I thought it was too much, to offer Comfort to a Friend for a few ſlight Diſgraces, by ſuch extraordinary Means as the Repreſentation of our Sufferings and Revolutions. What Reflections did I not make? I began to conſider the whole afreſh, and perceived my ſelf preſſed with the ſame weight of Grief, as when we firſt began to be miſerable. Tho' length of Time ought to have cloſed up my Wounds, yet the ſeeing them deſcribed by your Hand was ſufficient to make them all open and bleed afreſh. Nothing can ever

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ever blot from my Memory what you have Suffer'd in defence of your Writings. I cannot help thinking of the rancorous Malice of *Alberic* and *Lotulf*. A cruel Uncle, and an injured Lover, will be always preſent to my aking Sight. I ſhall never forget what Enemies your Learning, and what Envy your Glory rais'd againſt you. I ſhall never forget your Reputation, ſo juſtly acquired, torn to pieces, and blaſted by the inexorable Cruelty of half-learned Pretenders to Science. Was not your Treatiſe of Divinity condemned to be burnt? Was not your ſelf threatned with perpetual Impriſonment? In vain you urged in your Defence, that your Enemies impoſed on you Opinions quite different from your Meaning: In vain you condemn'd thoſe Opinions; all was of no Effect towards your Juſtification; 'twas reſolved you ſhould be a Heretick. What did not thoſe two falſe Prophets * accuſe you of, who declaim'd ſo ſeverely againſt you before the Council of *Sens*? What Scandals were vented on occaſion of the Name *Paraclete* given to your Chappel? What a Storm was raiſed againſt you by the treachcrous Monks, when

* *St.* Bernard, *and St.* Norbert.

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you did them the Honour to be call'd *their* Brother? This Hiſtory of our numerous Misfortunes, related in ſo true and moving a manner, made my Heart bleed within me: My Tears, which I cou'd not reſtrain, have blotted half your Letter; I wiſh they had effaced the whole, and that I had returned it to you in that condition; I ſhould then have been ſatisfied with the little time I kept it; but it was demanded of me too ſoon.

I muſt confeſs I was much eaſier in my Mind before I read your Letter. Sure all the Misfortunes of Lovers are conveyed to them thro' their Eyes. Upon reading your Letter, I felt all mine renew'd. I reproach'd my ſelf for having been ſo long without venting my Sorrows, when the Rage of our unrelenting Enemies ſtill burns with the ſame Fury; ſince length of Time, which diſarms the ſtrongeſt Hatred, ſeems but to aggravate theirs; ſince it is decreed that your Virtue ſhall be perſecuted 'till it takes Refuge in the Grave, and even beyond that, your Aſhes perhaps will not be ſuffer'd to reſt in Peace; Let me always meditate on your Calamities, let me publiſh them thro' all the World, if poſſible, to ſhame an Age that has not known how to value you. I will

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will ſpare no one, ſince no one would intereſt himſelf to protect you, and your Enemies are never weary of oppreſſing your Innocence. Alas! my Memory is perpetually filled with bitter Remembrances of paſs'd Evils, and are there more to be fear'd ſtill? Shall my *Abelard* be never mention'd without Tears? Shall the dear Name be never ſpoken but with Sighs? Obſerve, I beſeech you, to what a wretched Condition you have reduced me: Sad, afflicted, without any poſſible Comfort, unleſs it proceed from you. Be not then unkind, nor deny me, I beg of you, that little Relief which you only can give. Let me have a faithful Account of all that concerns you. I wou'd know every thing, be it ever ſo unfortunate. Perhaps, by mingling my Sighs with yours, I may make your Sufferings leſs; if that Obſervation be true, that all Sorrows divided are made lighter.

Tell me not, by way of Excuſe, you will ſpare our Tears; the Tears of Women ſhut up in a melancholy Place, and devoted to Penitence, are not to be ſpar'd. And if you wait for an Opportunity to write pleaſant and agreeable Things to us, you will delay Writing too long: Proſperity ſeldom chuſes the ſide of the virtuous; and Fortune

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is ſo blind, that in a Croud, in which there is perhaps but one Wiſe and brave Man, it is not to be expected ſhe ſhou'd ſingle him out. Write to me then immediately, and wait not for Miracles; they are too ſcarce, and we too much accuſtomed to Misfortunes to expect any happy Turn. I ſhall always have this, if you pleaſe, and this will be always agreeable to me, that when I receive any Letters from you, I ſhall know you ſtill remember me. *Seneca*, (with whoſe Writings you made me acquainted) as much a Stoick as he was, ſeemed to be ſo very ſenſible of this kind of Pleaſure, that upon opening any Letters from *Lucilius*, he imagined he felt the ſame Delight as when they converſed together.

I have made it an Obſervation ſince our Abſence, that we are much fonder of the Pictures of thoſe whom we love, when they are at a great diſtance, than when they are near to us. It ſeems to me as if the farther they are removed, the more their Pictures grow finiſh'd, and acquire a greater Reſemblance; at leaſt our Imagination, which perpetually figures them to us by the deſire we have of ſeeing them again, makes us think ſo. By a peculiar Power, Love can make that ſeem Life it ſelf, which as ſoon

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ſoon as the lov'd Object returns, is nothing but a little Canvas and dead Colours. I have your Picture in my Room, I never paſs by it without ſtopping to look at it; and yet when you were preſent with me, I ſcarce ever caſt my Eyes upon it: If a Picture, which is but a mute Repreſentation of an Object, can give ſuch Pleaſure, what cannot Letters inſpire? They have Souls, they can ſpeak, they have in them all that Force which expreſſes the Tranſports of the Heart; they have all the Fire of our Paſſions, they can raiſe them as much as if the Perſons themſelves were preſent; they have all the Softneſs and Delicacy of Speech, and ſometimes a Boldneſs of Expreſſion even beyond it.

We may write to each other; ſo innocent a Pleaſure is not forbidden us. Let us not loſe, thro' Negligence, the only Happineſs which is left us, and the only one perhaps which the Malice of our Enemies can never raviſh from us. I ſhall read that you are my Husband, and you ſhall ſee me addreſs you as a Wife. In ſpite of all your Misfortunes, you may be what you pleaſe in your Letter. Letters were firſt invented for comforting ſuch ſolitary Wretches as myſelf. Having loſt the ſubſtantial Pleaſures

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of ſeeing and poſſeſſing you, I ſhall in ſome meaſure compenſate this Loſs, by the Satisfaction I ſhall find in your Writing. There I ſhall read your moſt ſecret Thoughts; I ſhall carry them always about me, I ſhall kiſs them every moment; if you can be capable of any Jealouſie, let it be for the fond Careſſes I ſhall beſtow on your Letters, and envy only the Happineſs of thoſe Rivals. That Writing may be no trouble to you, write always to me careleſly, and without Study: I had rather read the Dictates of the Heart than of the Brain. I cannot live if you do not tell me you always love me; but that Language ought to be ſo natural to you, that I believe you cannot ſpeak otherwiſe to me, without great Violence to your ſelf. And ſince, by that melancholy Relation to your Friend, you have awaken'd all my Sorrows, 'tis but reaſonable you ſhould allay them by ſome Marks of an inviolable Love.

I do not however reproach you for the innocent Artifice you made uſe of to comfort a Perſon in Affliction, by comparing his Misfortune to another much greater. Charity is ingenious in finding out ſuch pious Artifices, and to be commended for uſing them. But do you owe nothing more

to

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to us than to that Friend, be the Friendſhip between you ever ſo intimate? We are call'd your Siſters; we call our ſelves your Children; and if it were poſſible to think of any Expreſſions which could ſignifie a dearer Relation, or a more affectionate Regard and mutual Obligation between us, we would uſe them: If we could be ſo ungrateful as not to ſpeak our juſt Acknowledgments to you, this Church, theſe Altars, theſe Walls, would reproach our Silence and ſpeak for us. But without leaving it to that, it will be always a Pleaſure to me to ſay, that you only are the Founder of this Houſe; 'tis wholly your Work. You, by inhabiting here, have given Fame and Sanctity to a Place, known before only for Robberies and Murders. You have in the litteral Senſe made the Den of Thieves a Houſe of Prayer. Theſe Cloiſters owe nothing to publick Charities; our Walls were not rais'd by the Uſury of Publicans, nor their Foundations laid in baſe Extortion. The God whom we ſerve, ſees nothing but innocent Riches, and harmleſs Votaries, whom you have placed here. Whatever this young Vineyard is, it owes it all to you; and it is your part to employ your whole Care to cultivate and improve

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it; this ought to be one of the principal Affairs of your Life. Tho' our Holy Renunciation, our Vows, and our manner of Life, ſeem to ſecure us from all Temptations; tho' our Walls and Grates prohibit all Approaches, yet 'tis the Outſide only, the bark of the Tree, is cover'd from Injuries; while the Sap of Original Corruption may imperceptibly ſpread within, even to the Heart, and prove fatal to the moſt promiſing Plantation, unleſs continual Care be taken to cultivate and ſecure it. Virtue in us is grafted upon Nature and the Woman; the one is weak, and the other always changeable. To plant the Lord's Vine is a Work of no little Labour, and after it is planted, it will require great Application and Diligence to manure it. The Apoſtle of the Gentiles, as great a Labourer as he was, ſays, he hath planted, and *Apollos* hath watered, but 'tis God that gives the Increaſe. *Paul* had planted the Goſpel among the *Corinthians*, by his holy and earneſt Preaching; *Apollos*, a zealous Diſciple of that great Maſter, continued to cultivate it by frequent Exhortations; and the Grace of God, which their conſtant Prayers implored for that Church, made the Endeavours of both ſucceſsful.

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This ought to be an Example for your Conduct towards us. I know you are not ſloathful; yet your Labours are not directed to us; your Cares are waſted upon a ſet of Men whoſe Thoughts are only earthly, and you refuſe to reach out your Hand to ſupport thoſe who are weak and ſtaggering, in their way to Heaven, and who with all their Endeavours can ſcarcely preſerve themſelves from falling. You fling the Pearls of the Goſpel before Swine, when you ſpeak to thoſe who are fill'd with the good Things of this World, and nouriſhed with the Fatneſs of the Earth; and you neglect the innocent Sheep, who, tender as they are, would yet follow you thro' Deſarts and Mountains. Why are ſuch Pains thrown away upon the ungrateful, while not a Thought is beſtowed upon your Children, whoſe Souls would be fill'd with a ſenſe of your Goodneſs? But why ſhould I intreat you in the Name of your Children? Is it poſſible I ſhould fear obtaining any thing of you, when I ask it in my own Name? And muſt I uſe any other Prayers than my own, to prevail upon you? The St. *Auſtin's*, *Tertullian's*, and *Jerome's*, have wrote to the *Eudoxa's*, *Paula's*, and *Melania's*; and can you read thoſe Names, tho' of Saints, and not remember mine?

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mine? Can it be Criminal for you to imitate St. *Jerome*, and diſcourſe with me concerning the Scripture; or *Tertullian*, and preach Mortification; or St. *Auſtin*, and explain to me the Nature of Grace? Why ſhould I only reap no Advantage from your Learning? When you write to me, you will write to your Wife. Marriage has made ſuch a Correſpondence lawful; and ſince you can, without giving the leaſt Scandal, ſatisfie me, why will you not? I am not only engaged by my Vows, which might poſſibly be ſometimes neglected; but I have a barbarous Uncle, whoſe Inhumanity is a Security againſt any criminal Deſire, which Tenderneſs and the remembrance of our paſt Enjoyments might inſpire. There is nothing that can cauſe you any Fear; you need not fly to Conquer. You may ſee me, hear my Sighs, and be a Witneſs of all my Sorrows, without incurring any Danger, ſince you can only relieve me with Tears and Words. If I have put my ſelf into a Cloiſter with Reaſon, perſwade me to continue in it with Devotion: You have been the Occaſion of all my Misfortune; you therefore muſt be the Inſtrument of all my Comfort.

You

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You cannot but remember, (for what do not Lovers remember?) with what Pleaſure I have paſt whole Days in hearing you Diſcourſe. How when you were abſent I ſhut my ſelf from every one to write to you; how uneaſie I was 'till my Letter had come to your Hands; what artful Management it required to engage Confidents. This Detail perhaps ſurpriſes you, and you are in pain for what will follow. But I am no longer aſhamed, that my Paſſion has had no Bounds for you; for I have done more than all this, I have hated my ſelf that I might love you; I came hither to ruin my ſelf in a perpetual Impriſonment, that I might make you live quiet and eaſie. Nothing but Virtue, join'd to a Love perfectly diſengaged from the Commerce of the Senſes, could have produced ſuch Effects. Vice never inſpires any thing like this; it is too much enſlaved to the Body. When we love Pleaſures, we love the living and not the dead. We leave off burning with Deſire, for thoſe who can no longer burn for us. This was my cruel Uncle's Notion; he meaſured my Virtue by the frailty of my Sex, and thought it was the Man, and not the Perſon, I loved. But he has been guilty to no purpoſe. I Love you more than

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than ever, and to revenge my ſelf of him, I will ſtill love you with all the Tenderneſs of my Soul 'till the laſt Moment of my Life. If formerly my Affection for you was not ſo pure, if in thoſe Days the Mind and the Body ſhared in the Pleaſure of loving you, I often told you even then, that I was more pleaſed with poſſeſſing your Heart, than with any other Happineſs, and the Man was the thing I leaſt valu'd in you.

You cannot but be entirely perſuaded of this, by the extreme Unwillingneſs I ſhew'd to Marry you; tho' I knew that the Name of Wife was honourable in the World, and holy in Religion, yet the Name of your Miſtreſs had greater Charms, becauſe it was more free. The Bonds of Matrimony, however honourable, ſtill bear with them a neceſſary Engagement. And I was very unwilling to be neceſſitated to love always a Man, who perhaps would not always love me. I deſpiſed the Name of Wife, that I might live happy with that of Miſtreſs: And I find by your Letter to your Friend, you have not forgot that Delicacy of Paſſion in a Woman who loved you always with the utmoſt Tenderneſs, and yet wiſh'd to love you more. You have very

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very juſtly obſerved in your Letter, that I eſteem'd thoſe Publick Engagements inſipid, which form Alliances only to be diſſolv'd by Death, and which put Life and Love under the ſame unhappy Neceſſity. But you have not added how often I have made Proteſtations that it was infinitely preferrable to me to live with *Abelard* as his Miſtreſs, than with any other as Empreſs of the World, and that I was more happy in obeying you, than I ſhou'd have been in lawfully captivating the Lord of the Univerſe. Riches and Pomp are not the Charms of Love. True Tenderneſs makes us ſeparate the Lover from all that is external to him, and ſetting aſide his Quality, Fortune and Employments, conſider him ſingly by himſelf.

'Tis not Love, but the deſire of Riches and Honour, which makes Women run into the Embraces of an Indolent Husband. Ambition, not Affection, forms ſuch Marriages. I believe indeed they may be followed with ſome Honours and Advantages, but I can never think that this is the way to enjoy the Pleaſures of an affectionate Union, nor to feel thoſe ſecret and charming Emotions of Hearts that have long ſtrove to be united. Theſe Martyrs of Marriage

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riage pine always for larger Fortunes, which they think they have lost. The Wife sees Husbands Richer than her own, and the Husband Wives better Portioned than his. Their interested Vows occasion Regret, and Regret produces Hatred. They soon part, or always desire it. This restless and tormenting Passion punishes them for aiming at other Advantages by Love than Love it self.

If there is any thing which may properly be call'd Happiness here below, I am perswaded it is in the Union of two Persons who love each other with perfect Liberty, who are united by a secret Inclination, and satisfied with each others Merit: Their Hearts are full, and leave no Vacancy for any other Passion; they enjoy perpetual Tranquility, because they enjoy Content.

If I could believe you as truly perswaded of my Merit as I am of yours, I might say there has been a time when we were such a Pair. Alas! How was it possible I should not be certain of your Merit? If I could ever have doubted it, the universal Esteem would have made me determine in your Favour. What Country, what City has not desir'd your Presence? Could you

ever

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ever retire but you drew the Eyes and Hearts of all after you? Did not every one rejoice in having ſeen you? Even Women, breaking thro' the Laws of Decorum which Cuſtom had impoſed upon them, ſhewed manifeſtly they felt ſomething more for you than Eſteem. I have known ſome who have been profuſe in their Husbands Praiſes who have yet envied my Happineſs, and given ſtrong Intimations, they could have refuſed you nothing. But what could reſiſt you? Your Reputation, which ſo much ſooth'd the Vanity of our Sex; your Air, your Manner; that Life in your Eyes which ſo admirably expreſs'd the Vivacity of your Mind; your Converſation, with that Eaſe and Elegance, which gave every thing you ſpoke ſuch an agreeable and inſinuating Turn; in ſhort, every thing ſpoke for you: Very different from ſome mere Schollars, who with all their Learning, have not the Capacity to keep up an ordinary Converſation; and with all their Wit, cannot win the Affections of Women, who have a much leſs ſhare than themſelves.

With what Eaſe did you compoſe Verſes? And yet thoſe ingenious Trifles, which were but a Recreation after your more ſerious Studies, are ſtill the Entertainment and Delight

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light of Perſons of the beſt Taſte. The ſmalleſt Song, nay the leaſt Sketch of any thing you made for me, had a thouſand Beauties capable of making it laſt as long as there are Love or Lovers in the World. Thus thoſe Songs will be Sung in Honour of other Women, which you deſigned only for me; and thoſe tender and natural Expreſſions which ſpoke your Love, will help others to explain their Paſſion, with much more Advantage than what they themſelves are capable of.

What Rivals did your Galantries of this kind occaſion me? How many Ladies laid Claim to them? 'Twas a Tribute their Self-love paid to their Beauty. How many have I ſeen with Sighs declare their Paſſion for you, when after ſome common Viſit you had made them, they chanced to be complemented for the *Sylvia* of your Poems: Others in Deſpair and Envy have reproach'd me, that I had no Charms but what your Wit beſtowed on me, nor in any thing the Advantage over them, but in being beloved by you. Can you believe me if I tell you, that notwithſtanding the Vanity of my Sex, I thought my ſelf peculiarly happy in having a Lover, to whom I was obliged for my Charms; and took a ſecret Pleaſure in being

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ing admired by a Man, who when he pleased could raise his Mistress to the Character of a Goddess? Pleased with your Glory only, I read with delight all those Praises you offer'd me, and without reflecting how little I deserved, I believed my self such as you described me, that I might be more certain I pleas'd you.

But oh! Where is that happy Time fled? I now lament my Lover, and of all my Joys there remains nothing but the painful remembrance that *they are past.* Now learn, all you my Rivals who once viewed my Happiness with such jealous Eyes, that he you once envied me, can never more be yours or mine. I loved him; my Love was his Crime and the Cause of his Punishment. My Beauty once charmed him: Pleas'd with each other, we pass'd our brightest Days in Tranquility and Happiness. If that was a Crime, 'tis a Crime I am yet fond of, and I have no other Regret, than that against my Will I must necessarily be innocent. But what do I say? My Misfortune was to have cruel Relations, whose Malice disturbed the Calm we enjoyed: Had they been capable of the Returns of Reason, I had now been happy in the Enjoyment of my dear Husband. Oh! How cruel were they when

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when their blind Fury urged a Villain to ſurpriſe you in your Sleep! Where was I? Where was your *Heloiſe* then? What Joy ſhould I have had in defending my Lover? I would have guarded you from Violence, tho' at the Expence of my Life; my Cries and Shrieks alone wou'd have ſtopped the Hand — Oh! whither does the Exceſs of my Paſſion hurry me? Here Love is ſhock'd, and Modeſty, join'd with Deſpair, deprive me of Words: 'Tis Eloquence to be ſilent, where no Expreſſions can reach the greatneſs of the Misfortune.

But tell me whence proceeds your Neglect of me ſince my being Profeſs'd? You know nothing mov'd me to it but your Diſgrace, nor did I give any Conſent but yours. Let me hear what is the Occaſion of your Coldneſs, or give me leave to tell you now my Opinion. Was it not the ſole view of Pleaſure which engaged you to me? And has not my Tenderneſs, by leaving you nothing to wiſh for, extinguiſh'd your Deſires? Wretched *Heloiſe*! You cou'd pleaſe when you wiſh'd to avoid it: You merited Incenſe, when you cou'd remove to a diſtance the Hand that offer'd it. But ſince your Heart has been ſoften'd, and has yielded; ſince you have Devoted and Sacrificed

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crificed your ſelf, you are deſerted and forgotten. I am convinc'd, by a ſad Experience, that it is natural to avoid thoſe to whom we have been too much obliged; and that uncommon Generoſity produces Neglect rather than Acknowledgment. My Heart ſurrendred too ſoon to gain the Eſteem of the Conqueror; you took it without difficulty, and give it up as eaſily. But ungrateful as you are I will never conſent to it. And tho' in this Place I ought not to retain a Wiſh of my own, yet I have ever ſecretly preſerved the Deſire of being beloved by you. When I pronounced my ſad Vow, I then had about me your laſt Letter, in which you proteſted you would be wholly mine, and would never live but to love me. 'Tis to you therefore I have offered my ſelf; you had my Heart, and I had yours; do not demand any thing back: You muſt bear with my Paſſion, as a thing which of right belongs to you, and from which you can no ways be diſengaged.

Alas! What Folly is it to talk at this rate? I ſee nothing here but marks of the Deity, and I ſpeak of nothing but Man! You have been the cruel Occaſion of this by your Conduct: Unfaithful Man! Ought you at once to break off loving me? Why did you not deceive

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deceive me for a while, rather than immediately abandon me? If you had given me at leaſt but ſome faint Signs even of a dying Paſſion, I my ſelf had favour'd the Deception. But in vain would I flatter my ſelf that you cou'd be conſtant; you have left me no colour of making your Excuſe. I deſire to ſee you, but if that be impoſſible, I will content my ſelf with a few Lines from your Hand. Is it ſo hard for one who loves, to write? I ask for none of your Letters filled with Learning, and writ for your Reputation: All I deſire is ſuch Letters as the Heart dictates, and which the Hand can ſcarce Write faſt enough. How did I deceive my ſelf with the Hopes that you would be wholly mine, when I took the Veil, and engaged my ſelf to live for ever under your Laws? For in being Profeſſed, I vowed no more than to be yours only, and I obliged my ſelf voluntarily to a Confinement in which you deſired to place me. Death only then can make me leave the Place where you have fixed me; and then too my Aſhes ſhall reſt here, and wait for yours, in order to ſhew my Obedience to the lateſt Moment poſſible.

Why ſhould I conceal from you the Secret of my Calling? you know it was neither

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ther Zeal nor Devotion which led me to the Cloiſter. Your Conſcience is too faithful a Witneſs to permit you diſown it. Alas! the Fleſh and not the Spirit placed me here. Here I am, here I will remain, to this Place an unfortunate Love and my cruel Relations have Condemned me. If you do not continue your Concern for me, if I loſe your Affection, what have I gain'd by my Impriſonment? What Recompence can I hope for? The unhappy Conſequences of a criminal Conduct, and your Diſgraces, have put on me this Habit of Chaſtity, and not the ſincere Deſire of being truly Penitent. Thus I ſtrive and labour in vain. Among thoſe who are wedded to God I ſerve a Man: Among the Heroick Supporters of the Croſs I am a poor Slave to a Human Paſſion; at the Head of a Religious Community I am devoted to *Abelard* only. What a Prodigy am I? Enlighten, me O Lord! Does thy Grace or my own Deſpair draw theſe Words from me? I am ſenſible I am in the Temple of Chaſtity, covered only with the Aſhes of that Fire which hath conſumed Us. I am here, I confeſs, a Sinner, but one who far from weeping for her Sins, weeps only, for her Lover;

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Lover; far from abhorring her Crimes, endeavours only to add to them; and who with a Weakneſs unbecoming the State I am in, pleaſe my ſelf continually with the Remembrance of paſt Actions, when it is impoſſible to renew them.

Good God! what is all this! I reproach my ſelf for my own Faults, I accuſe you of yours, and to what purpoſe? Veil'd as I am, behold in what a Diſorder you have plunged me! How difficult is it to Fight always for Duty againſt Inclination? I know what Obligations this Veil lays on me, but I feel more ſtrongly what Power a long habitual Paſſion has over my Heart. I am conquered by my Inclination. My Love troubles my Mind, and diſorders my Will. Sometimes I am ſway'd by the Sentiments of Piety which ariſe in me, and the next Moment I yield up my Imagination to all that is Amorous and Tender. I tell you to Day what I would not have ſaid to you Yeſterday. I had reſolved to Love you no more; I conſider'd I had made a Vow, taken the Veil, and am as it were dead and buried; yet there riſes unexpectedly from the Bottom of my Heart a Paſſion which triumphs over all theſe Notions, and darkens all my Reaſon and Devotion.

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Devotion. You reign in ſuch inward Retreats of my Soul, that I know not where to attack you: When I endeavour to break thoſe Chains by which I am bound to you, I only deceive my ſelf, and all the Efforts I am able to make ſerve but to bind them the faſter. Oh, for Pity's ſake help a Wretch to renounce her Deſires, her ſelf, and if it be poſſible even to renounce you! If you are a Lover, a Father, help a Miſtreſs, comfort a Child! Theſe tender Names, cannot they move you? Yield either to Pity or Love. If you gratifie my Requeſts I ſhall continue a Religious without longer profaning my Calling. I am ready to humble my ſelf with you to the wonderful Providence of God, who does all things for our Sanctification, who by his Grace purifies all that is Vitious and corrupt in the Principle, and by the inconceivable Riches of his Mercy draws us to himſelf againſt our Wiſhes, and by degrees opens our Eyes to diſcern the Greatneſs of his Bounty, which at firſt we wou'd not Underſtand.

I thought to end my Letter here. But now I am complaining againſt you, I muſt unload my Heart, and tell you all its Jealouſies and Reproaches. Indeed I thought

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it ſomething hard that when we had both engaged to conſecrate our ſelves to Heaven, you ſhould inſiſt upon my doing it firſt. Does *Abelard* then, ſaid I, ſuſpect he ſhall ſee renew'd in me the Example of *Lot*'s Wife, who could not forbear looking back when ſhe left *Sodom*? If my Youth and Sex might give an Occaſion of fear, that I ſhould return to the World; could not my Behaviour, my Fidelity, and this Heart which you ought to know, could not theſe baniſh ſuch ungenerous Apprehenſions? This diſtruſtful Foreſight touch'd me ſenſibly. I ſaid to my ſelf, There was a Time when he could rely upon my bare Word, and does he now want Vows to ſecure himſelf of me? What occaſion have I given him in the whole Courſe of my Life to admit the leaſt Suſpicion? I could meet him at all his Aſſignations, and wou'd I decline following him to the Seats of Holineſs? I who have not refuſed to be a Victim of Pleaſure to gratifie him, can he think I wou'd refuſe to be a Sacrifice of Honour to obey him? Has Vice ſuch Charms to well-born Souls? and when we have once drank of the Cup of Sinners, is it with ſuch difficulty that we take the Calice of Saints?

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Or did you believe your ſelf a greater Maſter to teach Vice than Virtue, or did you think it was more eaſie to perſuade me to the firſt than the latter? No: This Suſpicion would be injurious to both. Virtue is too amiable not to be embraced, when you reveal her Charms; and Vice too hideous not to be avoided, when you ſhew her Deformities. Nay, when you pleaſe, any thing ſeems lovely to me, and nothing is frightful or difficult when you are by. I am only Weak when I am alone and unſupported by you, and therefore it depends on you alone, that I may be ſuch as you deſire. I wiſh to Heaven you had not ſuch a Power over me. If you had any occaſion to fear, you would be leſs negligent. But what is there for you to fear? I have done too much, and now have nothing more to do, but to triumph over your Ingratitude. When we lived happy together, you might have made it a Doubt whether Pleaſure or Affection united me more to you; but the Place from whence I write to you, muſt now have entirely taken away that Doubt. Even here I love you as much as ever I did in the World. If I had loved Pleaſure, could I not yet have found means to have gratified my ſelf?

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I was not above Twenty two Years old: And there were other Men left, tho' I was deprived of *Abelard*: And yet did I not bury my ſelf alive in a Nunnery, and triumph over Love, at an Age capable of enjoying it in its full Latitude? 'Tis to you I Sacrifice theſe Remains of a tranſitory Beauty, theſe widow'd Nights and tedious Days, which I paſs without ſeeing you; and ſince you cannot make any uſe of them, I take them from you to offer them to Heaven, and to make, alas! but a ſecondary Oblation of my Heart, my Days, and my Life!

I am ſenſible I have been too Prolix on this Head; I ought to ſpeak leſs to you of your Misfortunes, and of my own Sufferings for Love of you. We tarniſh the Luſtre of our moſt beautiful Actions, when we applaud them our ſelves. This is true, and yet there is a time when we may with Decency commend our ſelves; when we have to do with thoſe whom baſe Ingratitude has ſtupified, we cannot too much praiſe our own Benefactions. Now if you were of this ſort of Men, this would be a home Reflection on you. Irreſolute as I am I ſtill love you, and yet I muſt hope for nothing. I have renounced Life, and ſtripp'd my ſelf of every thing, but I find I neither have

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have nor can renounce my *Abelard*: Tho' I have loſt my Lover, I ſtill preſerve my Love. O Vows! O Convent! I have not loſt my Humanity under your inexorable Diſcipline! You have not made me Marble by changing my Habit: My Heart is not hardned by my Impriſonment; I am ſtill ſenſible to what has touched me, tho' alas I ought not to be ſo! Without offending your Commands, permit a Lover to exhort me to live in Obedience to your rigorous Rules. Your Yoke will be lighter, if that Hand ſupport me under it; your Exerciſes will be amiable, if he ſhews me their Advantage. Retirement, Solitude! You will not appear terrible, if I may but ſtill know I have any Place in his Memory. A Heart which has been ſo ſenſibly affected as mine cannot ſoon be indifferent. We fluctuate long between Love and Hatred, before we can arrive at a happy Tranquility, and we always flatter our ſelves with ſome diſtant hope, that we ſhall not be quite forgotten.

Yes, *Abelard*, I conjure you by the Chains I bear here, to eaſe the weight of them, and make them as agreeable as I wiſh they were to me: Teach me the Maxims of Divine Love. Since you have forſaken me

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I glory in being wedded to Heaven. My Heart adores that Title, and diſdains any other; tell me how this Divine Love is nouriſhed, how it Operates, and Purifies it ſelf. When we were toſs'd in the Ocean of the World we could hear of nothing but your Verſes, which publiſhed every where our Joys and our Pleaſures. Now we are in the Haven of Grace, is it not fit you ſhould Diſcourſe to me of this Happineſs, and teach me every thing which might improve and heighten it? Shew me the ſame Complaiſance in my preſent Condition, as you did when we were in the World. Without changing the Ardor of our Affections, let us change their Object; let us leave our Songs, and ſing Hymns; let us lift up our Hearts to God, and have no Tranſports but for his Glory.

I expect this from you as a thing you cannot refuſe me. God has a peculiar Right over the Hearts of Great Men, which he has created. When he pleaſes to touch them, he raviſhes them, and lets them not ſpeak nor breath but for his Glory? Till that Moment of Grace arrives, O think of me——do not forget me——remember my Love, my Fidelity, my Conſtancy; love me as your Miſtreſs, cheriſh me as your Child,

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Child, your Siſter, your Wife. Conſider that I ſtill love you, and yet ſtrive to avoid loving you. What a Word, what a Deſign is this! I ſhake with Horror, and my Heart Revolts againſt what I ſay. I ſhall blot all my Paper with Tears — I end my long Letter, wiſhing you, if you can deſire it, (would to Heaven I could) for ever Adieu.

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LETTER III.

ABELARD *to* HELOISE.

That the Reader may make a right Judgment on the following Letter, it is proper he ſhould be informed of the Condition Abelard *was in when he wrote it. The Duke of* Brittany, *whoſe Subject he was Born, jealous of the Glory of* France, *which then ingroſſed all the moſt famous Scholars of* Europe, *and being beſides acquainted with the Perſecution* Abelard *had ſuffered from his Enemies, had nominated him to the Abby of St.* Gildas, *and by this Benefaction and Mark of his Eſteem, engaged him to paſs the reſt of his Days in his Dominions. He received this Favour with great Joy, imagining, that by leaving* France, *he ſhould loſe his Paſſion, and gain a new turn of Mind upon entring into his new Dignity. The Abby of St.* Gildas *is ſeated upon a Rock, which the Sea beats with its Waves.* Abelard, *who had laid on himſelf the Neceſſity of vanquiſhing a Paſſion which Abſence had in a great meaſure weakened, endeavour'd in this Solitude to extinguiſh the Remains of it by his Tears. But upon his receiving the foregoing Letter, he could not reſiſt ſo powerful an Attack, but proves as weak and as much to be pity'd as* Heloiſe: *'Tis not then a Maſter or Director that ſpeaks to*

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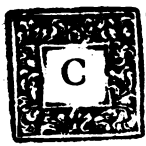
to her, but a Man who had loved her, and loves her ſtill: And under this Character we are to conſider Abelard *when he wrote the following Letter. If he ſeems by ſome Paſſages in it to have begun to feel the Motions of Divine Grace, they appear as yet to be only by Starts, and without any Uniformity.*



OULD I have imagined that a Letter not written to your ſelf could have fallen into your Hands, I had been more cautious not to have inſerted any thing in it which might awaken the Memory of our paſt Misfortunes. I deſcribed with Boldneſs the Series of my Diſgraces to a Friend, in order to make him leſs ſenſible of a Loſs he had ſuſtain'd. If by this well meaning Artifice I have diſturbed you, I purpoſe here to dry up thoſe Tears which the ſad Deſcription occaſioned you to ſhed: I intend to mix my Grief with yours, and pour out my Heart before you; in ſhort, to lay open before your Eyes all my Trouble, and the Secret of my Soul, which my Vanity has hitherto made me conceal from the reſt of the World, and which you now force from me, in ſpight of my Reſolutions to the contrary.

It is true, that in a Senſe of the Afflictions which had befallen us, and obſerving

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that no change of our Condition was to be expected; that thoſe proſperous Days which had ſeduced us were now paſt, and there remain'd nothing but to eraze out of our Minds, by painful Endeavours, all Marks and Remembrance of them, I had wiſhed to find in Philoſophy and Religion a Remedy for my Diſgrace; I ſearch'd out an *Aſylum* to ſecure me from Love. I was come to the ſad Experiment of making Vows to harden my Heart. But what have I gain'd by this? If my Paſſion has been put under a Reſtraint, my Idæa's yet remain. I promiſe my ſelf that I will forget you, and yet cannot think of it without loving you; and am pleaſed with that Thought. My Love is not at all weaken'd by thoſe Reflections I make in order to free my ſelf. The Silence I am ſurrounded with makes me more ſenſible to its Impreſſions, and while I am unemploy'd with any other things, this makes it ſelf the buſineſs of my whole Vacation. 'Till after a multitude of uſeleſs Endeavours I begin to perſwade my ſelf, that 'tis a ſuperfluous Trouble to ſtrive to free my ſelf; and that it is Wiſdom ſufficient if I can conceal from every one but you, my Confuſion and Weakneſs.

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I remove to a diſtance from your Perſon, with an Intention of avoiding you as an Enemy; and yet I inceſſantly ſeek for you in my Mind: I recall your Image in my Memory; and in ſuch different Diſquietudes I betray and contradict my ſelf. I hate you; I love you; Shame preſſes me on all ſides; I am at this Moment afraid leaſt I ſhould ſeem more indifferent than you are, and yet I am aſhamed to diſcover my Trouble. How weak are we in our ſelves, if we do not ſupport our ſelves on the Croſs of Chriſt? Shall we have ſo little Courage, and ſhall that Uncertainty your Heart labours with, of ſerving two Maſters, affect mine too? You ſee the Confuſion I am in, what I blame my ſelf for, and what I ſuffer. Religion commands me to purſue Virtue, ſince I have nothing to hope for from Love. But Love ſtill preſerves its Dominion in my Fancy, and entertains its ſelf with paſt Pleaſures. Memory ſupplies the Place of a Miſtreſs. Piety and Duty are not always the Fruits of Retirement; even in Deſarts, when the Dew of Heaven falls not on us, we love what we ought no longer to love. The Paſſions, ſtir'd up by Solitude, fill thoſe Regions of Death and Silence; and it is very ſeldom that what ought to be is truly follow'd there,

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there, and that God only is Loved and Served. Had I always had ſuch Notions as theſe, I had inſtructed you better. You call me your Maſter; 'tis true, you were intruſted to my Care. I ſaw you, I was earneſt to teach you vain Sciences; it coſt you your Innocence, and me my Liberty. Your Uncle, who was fond of you, became therefore my Enemy, and revenged himſelf on me. If now having loſt the Power of ſatisfying my Paſſion, I had loſt too that of loving you, I ſhou'd have ſome Conſolation. My Enemies would have given me that Tranquility, which *Origine* purchaſed by a Crime: How miſerable am I! My Misfortune does not looſe my Chains, my Paſſion grows furious by Impotence, and that Deſire I ſtill have for you amidſt all my Diſgraces, makes me more unhappy than the Misfortune it ſelf. I find my ſelf much more guilty in my Thoughts of you, even amidſt my Tears, than in poſſeſſing your ſelf when I was in full Liberty. I continually think of you, I continually call to Mind that Day when you beſtowed on me the firſt Marks of your Tenderneſs. In this Condition, O Lord! if I run to proſtrate my ſelf before thy Altars, if I beſeech thee to pity me, why does not the pure Flame of

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of thy Spirit conſume the Sacrifice that is offered to thee? Cannot this Habit of Penitence which I wear, intereſt Heaven to treat me more favourably? But that is ſtill inexorable, becauſe my Paſſion ſtill lives in me, the Fire is only covered over with deceitful Aſhes, and cannot be extinguiſhed but by extraordinary Grace. We deceive Men, but nothing is hid from God.

You tell me, that 'tis for me you live under that Veil which covers you; why do you prophane your Vocation with ſuch Words? Why provoke a Jealous God by a Blaſphemy? I hoped after our Separation, you would have chang'd your Sentiments; I hoped too, that God would have deliver'd me from the tumult of my Senſes, and that Contrariety which reigns in my Heart. We commonly die to the Affections of thoſe whom we ſee no more, and they to ours: Abſence is the Tomb of Love. But to me Abſence is an unquiet Remembrance of what I once loved, which continually torments me. I flatter'd my ſelf that when I ſhould ſee you no more, you would only reſt in my Memory, without giving any trouble to my Mind; that *Brittany* and the Sea would inſpire other Thoughts; that my Faſts and Studies would by degrees eraze you out of my

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my Heart: But in ſpite of ſevere Faſts and redoubled Studies, in ſpite of the diſtance of three hundred Miles which ſeparates us; your Image, ſuch as you deſcribe your ſelf in your Veil, appears to me, and confounds all my Reſolutions.

What means have I not uſed? I have armed my own Hands againſt my ſelf; I have exhauſted my Strength in conſtant Exerciſes; I Comment upon St. *Paul*; I Diſpute with *Ariſtotle*; in ſhort, I do all I uſed to do before I lov'd you, but all in vain; nothing can be ſucceſsful that oppoſes you. Oh! do not add to my Miſeries by your Conſtancy; forget, if you can, your Favours, and that Right which they claim over me; permit me to be indifferent. I envy their Happineſs who have never loved; how quiet and eaſie are they! But the Tide of Pleaſures has always a reflux of Bitterneſs: I am but too much convinc'd now of this; but tho' I am no longer deceiv'd by Love, I am not cured. While my Reaſon condemns it, my Heart declares for it. I am deplorable, that I have not the Ability to free my ſelf from a Paſſion which ſo many Circumſtances, this Place, my Perſon, and my Diſgraces, tend to deſtroy. I yield, without conſidering, that a Reſiſtance would wipe out my paſt Offences,

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Offences, and would procure me in their ſtead, Merit and Repoſe. Why ſhould you uſe Eloquence to reproach me for my Flight, and for my Silence? Spare the Recital of our Aſſignations, and your conſtant Exactneſs to them; without calling up ſuch diſturbing Thoughts, I have enough to ſuffer. What great Advantages would Philoſophy give us over other Men, if by ſtudying it we could learn to govern our Paſſions? But how humbled ought we to be when we cannot Maſter them? What Efforts, what Relapſes, what Agitations do we undergo? And how long are we toſt in this Confuſion, unable to exert our Reaſon, to poſſeſs our Souls, or to rule our Affections?

What a troubleſome Employment is Love! and how valuable is Virtue even upon Conſideration of our own Eaſe! Recollect your Extravagancies of Paſſion, gueſs at my Diſtractions; number up our Cares, if poſſible, our Griefs, and our Inquietudes; throw theſe things out of the Account, and let Love have all its remaining Softneſs and Pleaſure. How little is that? And yet for ſuch Shadows of Enjoyments which at firſt appeared to us, are we ſo weak our whole Lives that we cannot now help Writing to each

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each other, covered as we are with Sackcloth and Aſhes: How much happier ſhou'd we be, if by our Humiliations and Tears we could make our Repentance ſure. The Love of Pleaſure is not eradicated out of the Soul, but by extraordinary Efforts; it has ſo powerful a Party in our Breaſts, that we find it difficult to condemn it to our ſelves. What Abhorrence can I be ſaid to have of my Sins, if the Objects of them are always amiable to me? How can I ſeparate from the Perſon I love, the Paſſion I muſt deteſt? Will the Tears I ſhed be ſufficient to render it odious to me? I know not how it happens, there is always a Pleaſure in weeping for a beloved Object. 'Tis difficult in our Sorrow to diſtinguiſh Penitence from Love. The Memory of the Crime, and the Memory of the Object which has charmed us, are too nearly related to be immediately ſeparated. And the Love of God in its beginning, does not wholly annihilate the Love of the Creature.

But what Excuſes cou'd I not find in you, if the Crime were excuſable? Unprofitable Honour, troubleſome Riches, could never tempt me; but thoſe Charms, that Beauty, that Air, which I yet behold at this Inſtant, have occaſioned my Fall. Your Looks were the beginning of my Guilt; your Eyes, your

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your Diſcourſe, pierc'd my Heart; and in ſpite of that Ambition and Glory which fill'd it and offer'd to make a Defence, Love ſoon made it ſelf Maſter. God, in order to puniſh me, forſook me. His Providence permitted thoſe Conſequences which have ſince happened. You are no longer of the World; you have renounced it: I am a Religious, devoted to Solitude; ſhall we make no Advantage of our Condition? Would you deſtroy my Piety in its Infant State? Would you have me forſake the Convent into which I am but newly enter'd? Muſt I renounce my Vows? I have made them in the Preſence of God; Whither ſhall I fly from his Wrath, if I violate them? Suffer me to ſeek for Eaſe in my Duty: How difficult is it to procure that! I paſs whole Days and Nights alone in this Cloiſter, without cloſing my Eyes. My Love burns fiercer, amidſt the happy indifference of thoſe who ſurround me, and my Heart is at once pierced with your Sorrows and its own. Oh what a Loſs have I ſuſtain'd, when I conſider your Conſtancy! What Pleaſures have I miſſed enjoying! I ought not to confeſs this weakneſs to you; I am ſenſible I commit a fault; if I could have ſhew'd more firmneſs of Mind, I ſhould perhaps

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perhaps have provoked your Reſentment againſt me, and your Anger might work that Effect in you which your Virtue cou'd not. If in the World I publiſhed my Weakneſs by Verſes and Love-ſongs, ought not the dark Cells of this Houſe to conceal that Weakneſs, at leaſt under an Appearance of Piety! Alas! I am ſtill the ſame! Or if I avoid the Evil, I cannot do the Good; and yet I ought to join both, in order to make this manner of living profitable. But how difficult is this in the Trouble which ſurrounds me? Duty, Reaſon, and Decency, which upon other Occaſions have ſome Power over me, are here entirely uſeleſs. The Goſpel is a Language I do not underſtand, when it oppoſes my Paſſion. Thoſe Oaths which I have taken before the Holy Altar, are feeble Helps when oppoſed to you. Amidſt ſo many Voices which call me to my Duty, I hear and I obey nothing but the ſecret Motions of a deſperate Paſſion. Void of all reliſh for Virtue, any concern for my Condition, or any Application to my Studies, I am continually preſent by my Imagination where I ought not to be, and I find I have no Power, when I would at any time correct it. I feel a perpetual ſtrife between my Inclination and my Duty. I find

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find my ſelf entirely a diſtracted Lover; unquiet in the midſt of Silence, and reſtleſs in this abode of Peace and Repoſe. How ſhameful is ſuch a Condition!

Conſider me no more, I entreat you, as a Founder, or any great Perſonage; your Encomiums do but ill agree with ſuch multiply'd Weakneſſes. I am a miſerable Sinner, proſtrate before my Judge, and with my Face preſſed to the Earth, I mix my Tears and Sighs in the Duſt, when the Beams of Grace and Reaſon enlighten me. Come, ſee me in this Poſture, and ſolicite me to love you? Come, if you think fit, and in your Holy Habit thruſt your ſelf between God and me, and be a Wall of Separation. Come, and force from me thoſe Sighs, Thoughts, and Vows, which I owe to him only. Aſſiſt the Evil Spirits, and be the Inſtrument of their Malice. What cannot you induce a Heart to, whoſe weakneſs you ſo perfectly know? But rather withdraw your ſelf, and contribute to my Salvation. Suffer me to avoid Deſtruction, I entreat you, by our former tendereſt Affection, and by our now common Misfortunes. It will always be the higheſt Love to ſhew none: I here releaſe you of all your Oaths and Engagements. Be God's wholly, to whom you

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you are appropriated; I will never oppoſe ſo pious a Deſign. How happy ſhall I be if I thus loſe you! then ſhall I be indeed a Religious, and you a perfect Example of an Abbeſs.

Make your ſelf amends by ſo glorious a Choice; make your Virtue a Spectacle worthy Men and Angels: Be humble among your Children, Aſſiduous in your Choire, exact in your Diſcipline, diligent in your Reading; make even your Recreations uſeful. Have you purchaſed your Vocation at ſo ſlight a rate, as that you ſhould not turn it to the beſt Advantage? Since you have permitted your ſelf to be abuſed by falſe Doctrine, and Criminal Inſtructions, reſiſt not thoſe good Counſels which Grace and Religion inſpire me with. I will confeſs to you, I have thought my ſelf hitherto an abler Maſter to inſtil Vice, than to excite Virtue. My falſe Eloquence has only ſet off falſe Good. My Heart, drunk with Voluptuouſneſs, could only ſuggeſt terms proper and moving to recommend that. The Cup of Sinners overflows with ſo Enchanting a Sweetneſs, and we are naturally ſo much inclined to taſte it, that it needs only be offer'd to us. On the other hand, the Calice of Saints is fill'd with a bitter Draught,

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Draught, and Nature ſtarts from it. And yet you reproach me with Cowardice for giving it you firſt; I willingly ſubmit to theſe Accuſations. I cannot enough admire the forwardneſs you ſhewed to take the Religious Habit: Bear therefore with Courage the Croſs which you have taken up ſo reſolutely. Drink the Calice of Saints even to the bottom, without turning your Eyes with uncertainty upon me: Let me remove far from you, and obey the Apoſtle who hath ſaid *fly*.

You intreat me to return, under a Pretence of Devotion. Your Earneſtneſs in this point creates a Suſpicion in me, and makes me doubtful how to anſwer you. Should I commit an Error here, my Words would bluſh, if I may ſay ſo, after the Hiſtory of my Misfortunes. The Church is jealous of its Glory, and commands that her Children ſhould be induced to the Practice of Virtue by virtuous means. When we have approach'd God after an unblameable manner, we may then with boldneſs invite others to him. But to forget *Heloiſe*, to ſee her no more, is what Heaven demands of *Abelard*; and to expect nothing from *Abelard*, to loſe him, even in Idea, is what Heaven enjoins *Heloiſe*. To forget, in the Caſe

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Caſe of Love, is the moſt neceſſary Penitence, and the moſt difficult. It is eaſie to recount our Faults; how many, thro' Indiſcretion have made themſelves a ſecond Pleaſure of this, inſtead of confeſſing them with Humility. The only way to return to God is, by neglecting the Creature which we have adored, and adoring God whom we have neglected. This may appear harſh, but it muſt be done if we would be ſaved.

To make it more eaſie, obſerve why I preſſed you to make your Vow before I did mine; and pardon my Sincerity, and the deſign I have of meriting your Neglect and Hatred, if I conceal nothing from you of the Particulars you enquire after. When I ſaw my ſelf ſo oppreſs'd with my Misfortune, my Impotency made me jealous, and I conſider'd all Men as my Rivals. Love has more Diſtruſt than Aſſurance. I was apprehenſive of abundance of things, becauſe I ſaw I had abundance of Defects; and being tormented with fear from my own Example, I imagined your Heart, which had been ſo much accuſtomed to Love, would not be long without entring into a new Engagement. Jealouſie can eaſily believe the moſt dreadful Conſequences. I was deſirous

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ſirous to put my ſelf out of a poſſibility of doubting of you. I was very urgent to perſwade you that Decency required that you ſhould withdraw from the envious Eyes of the World; that Modeſty, and our Friendſhip demanded it; nay, that your own Safety obliged you to it; and that after ſuch a Revenge taken upon me, you could expect to be ſecure no where but in a Convent.

I will do you Juſtice, you very were eaſily perſwaded to it. My Jealouſie ſecretly triumph'd over your innocent Compliance; and yet, triumphant as I was, I yielded you up to God with an unwilling Heart. I ſtill kept my Gift as much as was poſſible, and only parted with it that I might effectually put it out of the power of Men. I did not perſwade you to Religion out of any regard to your Happineſs, but condemn'd you to it, like an Enemy who deſtroys what he cannot carry off. And yet you heard my Diſcourſes with Kindneſs, you ſometimes interrupted me with Tears, and preſſed me to acquaint you which of the Convents was moſt in my Eſteem. What a Comfort did I feel in ſeeing you ſhut up! I was now at Eaſe, and took a Satisfaction in conſidering that you did not continue long in the

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the World after my Diſgrace, and that you wou'd return into it no more.

But ſtill this was doubtful; I imagined Women were incapable of maintaining any conſtant Reſolutions, unleſs they were forced by the neceſſity of fixed Vows. I wanted thoſe Vows, and Heaven it ſelf, for your Security, that I might no longer diſtruſt you. Ye holy Manſions, ye impenetrable Retreats, from what numberleſs Apprehenſions have you freed me? Religion and Piety keep a ſtrict Guard round your Grates and high Walls. What a Haven of Reſt is this to a jealous Mind! And with what Impatience did I endeavour after it! I went every Day trembling to exhort you to this Sacrifice; I admired, without daring to mention it then, a brightneſs in your Beauty which I had never obſerved before. Whether it was the Bloom of a riſing Virtue, or an Anticipation of that great loſs I was going to ſuffer, I was not curious in examining the Cauſe, but only haſtened your being Profeſſed. I engaged your Prioreſs in my Guilt by a criminal Bribe, with which I purchaſed the Right of burying you. The Profeſſed of the Houſe were alike bribed, and concealed from you, by my Directions, all their Scruples and Diſguſts.

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guſts. I omitted nothing, either little or great: And if you had eſcaped all my Snares, I my ſelf would not have retired: I was reſolved to follow you every where. This Shadow of my ſelf would always have purſu'd your Steps, and continually occaſioned either your Confuſion or Fear, which would have been a ſenſible Gratification to me.

But thanks to Heaven, you reſolved to make a Vow; I accompanied you with Terror to the foot of the Altar: And while you ſtretched out your Hand to touch the ſacred Cloth, I heard you pronounce diſtinctly thoſe fatal words which for ever ſeparated you from all Men. 'Till then your Beauty and Youth ſeemed to oppoſe my Deſign, and to threaten your return into the World. Might not a ſmall Temptation have chang'd you? Is it poſſible to renounce ones ſelf entirely at the Age of Two and Twenty? At an Age which claims the moſt abſolute Liberty, could you think the World no longer worthy of your regard? How much did I wrong you, and what weakneſs did I impute to you? You were in my Imagination nothing but Lightneſs and Inconſtancy. Might not a young Woman at the noiſe of the Flames, and of the Fall of *Sodom*, look back, and pity ſome

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one Perſon? I took notice of your Eyes, your Motion, your Air; I trembled at every thing. You may call ſuch a ſelf-intereſted Conduct Treachery, Perfidiouſneſs, Murther. A Love which was ſo like to Hatred, ought to provoke the utmoſt Contempt and Anger.

It is fit you ſhould know that the very Moment, when I was convinced of your being entirely devoted to me, when I ſaw you were infinitely worthy of all my Love and Acknowledgment; I imagin'd I could love you no more; I thought it time to leave off giving you any Marks of Affection; and I conſider'd that by your Holy Eſpouſals you were now the peculiar Care of Heaven, even in the Quality of a Wife. My Jealouſie ſeemed to be extinguiſh'd: When God only is our Rival, we have nothing to fear; and being in greater Tranquility than ever before, I dared even to offer up Prayers, and beſeech him to take you away from my Eyes; but it was not a time to make ſuch raſh Prayers; and my Faith was too imperfect to let them be heard. He who ſees the Depths and Secrets of all Mens Hearts, ſaw mine did not agree with my Words. Neceſſity and Deſpair were the Springs of this Proceeding. Thus I inadvertently

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vertently offer'd an Inſult to Heaven, rather than a Sacrifice. God rejected my Offering and my Prayer, and continued my Puniſhment, by ſuffering me to continue my Love. Thus under the Guilt of your Vows, and of the Paſſion which preceded them, I muſt be tormented all the days of my Life.

If God ſpoke to your Heart, as to that of a Religious, whoſe Innocence had firſt engag'd him to heap on it a thouſand Favours, I ſhou'd have matter of Comfort; but to ſee both of us Victims of a criminal Love; to ſee this Love inſult us, and inveſt it ſelf with our very Habits, as with Spoils it has taken from our Devotion, fills me with Horror and Trembling. Is this a State of Reprobation? Or are theſe the Conſequences of a long Drunkenneſs in Prophane Love? We cannot ſay Love is a Drunkenneſs and a Poiſon, 'till we are illuminated by Grace; in the mean time it is an Evil which we doat on. When we are under ſuch a Miſtake, the knowledge of our Miſery is the firſt Step towards Amendment. Who does not know that 'tis for the Glory of God, to find no other Foundation in Man for his Mercy, than Man's very Weakneſs? When he has ſhew'd us

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this Weakneſs, and we bewail it, he is ready to put forth his Omnipotence to aſſiſt us. Let us ſay for our Comfort, that what we ſuffer is one of thoſe long and terrible Temptations which have ſometimes diſturbed the Vocations of the moſt Holy.

God can afford his Preſence to Men, in order to ſoften their Calamities, whenever he ſhall think fit. It was his Pleaſure, when you took the Veil, to draw you to him by his Grace. I ſaw your Eyes, when you ſpoke your laſt farewel, fix'd upon the Croſs. It was above ſix Months before you wrote me a Letter, nor during all that time did I receive any Meſſage from you. I admired this Silence, which I durſt not blame, and could not imitate: I wrote to you, you returned me no Anſwer: Your Heart was then ſhut; but this Garden of the Spouſe is now open'd, he is withdrawn from it, and has left you alone: By removing from you, he has made Tryal of you; call him back, and ſtrive to regain him. We muſt have the Aſſiſtance of God, that we may break our Chains; we have engaged too deeply in Love, to free our ſelves. Our Follies have penetrated even into the moſt Sacred Places. Our Amours have been matter of Scandal to a whole Kingdom.

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They are read and admired; Love which produced them, has cauſed them to be deſcribed. We ſhall be a Conſolation for the Failings of Youth hereafter. Thoſe who offend after us, will think themſelves leſs Guilty. We are Criminals whoſe Repentance is late, O may it be ſincere! Let us repair, as far as is poſſible, the Evils we have done; and let *France*, which has been the Witneſs of our Crimes, be aſtoniſhed at our Penitence. Let us confound all who wou'd imitate our Guilt; let us take the part of God againſt our ſelves, and by ſo doing prevent his Judgment. Our former Irregularities require Tears, Shame, and Sorrow to expiate them. Let us offer up theſe Sacrifices from our Hearts; let us bluſh, let us weep. If in theſe weak beginnings, Lord, our Heart is not intirely thine, let it at leaſt be made ſenſible that it ought to be ſo!

Deliver your ſelf, *Heloiſe*, from the ſhameful Remains of a Paſſion which has taken too deep Root. Remember that the leaſt thought for any other than God is an Adultery. If you could ſee me here with my meager Face, and melancholy Air, ſurrounded with numbers of perſecuting Monks, who are alarmed at my Reputation for

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Learning, and offended at my lean Viſage, as if I threaten'd them with a Reformation; what would you ſay of my baſe Sighs, and of thoſe unprofitable Tears which deceive theſe credulous Men. I am humbled under Love, and not under the Croſs. Pity me, and free your ſelf. If your Vocation be, as you ſay, my Work, deprive me not of the Merit of it by your continual Inquietudes. Tell me that you will honour the Habit which covers you, by an inward Retirement. Fear God, that you may be delivered from your Frailties. Love him, if you would advance in Virtue. Be not uneaſie in the Cloiſter, for it is the dwelling of Saints. Embrace your Bands, they are the Chains of Chriſt Jeſus: He will lighten them, and bear them with you, if you bear them with Humility.

Without growing ſevere to a Paſſion which yet poſſeſſes you, learn from your own Miſery to ſuccour your weak Siſters; pity them upon conſideration of your own Faults. And if any Thoughts too natural ſhould importune you, fly to the Foot of the Croſs, and beg for Mercy; there are Wounds open; lament before the dying Deity. At the Head of a religious Society be not a Slave, and having Rule over Queens, begin

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begin to govern your ſelf. Bluſh at the leaſt Revolt of your Senſes. Remember that even at the foot of the Altar we often Sacrifice to lying Spirits, and that no Incence can be more agreeable to them, than that which in thoſe Holy Places burns in the Heart of a Religious ſtill ſenſible of Paſſion and Love. If during your Abode in the World, your Soul has acquir'd a Habit of loving, feel it now no more but for Jeſus Chriſt. Repent of all the Moments of your Life which you have waſted upon the World, and upon Pleaſure; demand them of me, 'tis a robbery which I am guilty of; take Courage, and boldly reproach me with it.

I have been indeed your Maſter, but it was only to teach you Sin. You call me your Father; before I had any claim to this Title, I deſerved that of Parricide. I am your Brother, but 'tis the Affinity of our Crimes that has purchaſed me that diſtinction. I am call'd your Husband, but it is after a publick Scandal. If you have abuſed the Sanctity of ſo many venerable Names in the Superſcription of your Letter, to do me Honour, and flatter your own Paſſion, blot them out, and place in their ſtead thoſe

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of a Murtherer, a Villain, an Enemy, who has conſpired againſt your Honour, troubled your Quiet, and betray'd your Innocence. You would have periſh'd thro' my means, but for an extraordinary act of Grace which, that you might be ſaved, has thrown me down in the middle of my courſe.

This is the Idea you ought to have of a Fugitive, who endeavours to deprive you of the hope of ſeeing him any more. But when Love has once been ſincere, how difficult is it to determine to love no more? 'Tis a thouſand times more eaſie to renounce the World than Love. I hate this deceitful faithleſs World; I think no more of it; but my Heart ſtill wandring, will eternally make me feel the Anguiſh of having loſt you, in ſpite of all the Convictions of my Underſtanding. In the mean time, tho' I ſhou'd be ſo cowardly as to retract what you have read, do not ſuffer me to offer my ſelf to your Thoughts, but under this laſt Notion. Remember my firſt Endeavours were to ſeduce your Heart. You periſhed by my means, and I with you. The ſame Waves, the ſame Shipwreck ſwallowed us both up. We waited for Death with Indif-

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Indifference, and the ſame Death had carry'd us headlong to the ſame Puniſhments. Providence has turned off this Blow, and our Shipwreck has thrown us into a Haven. There are Perſons which the Mercy of God ſaves by Afflictions. Let my Salvation be the Fruit of your Prayers! Let me owe it to your Tears or exemplary Holineſs! Tho' my Heart, Lord! be filled with the love of one of thy Creatures, thy Hand can when it pleaſes draw out of it thoſe Ideas which fill its whole Capacity. To love *Heloiſe* truly, is to leave her entirely to that quiet which Retirement and Virtue afford. I have reſolved it; this Letter ſhall be my laſt Fault. Adieu.

If I die here, I will give Orders that my Body be carried to the Houſe of the *Paraclete*. You ſhall ſee me in that condition; not to demand Tears from you, 'twill then be too late; weep rather for me now, to extinguiſh that Fire which burns me. You ſhall ſee me, to ſtrengthen your Piety by the Horror of this Carcaſs, and my Death then more Eloquent than I can be, will tell you what

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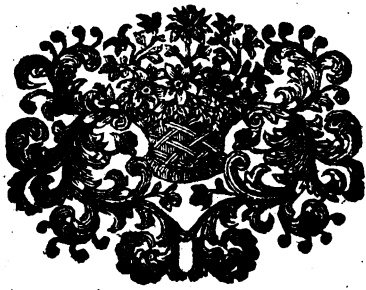
you love, when you love a Man. I hope you will be contented, when you have finiſhed this mortal Life, to be buried near me. Your cold Aſhes need then fear nothing, and my Tomb will by that means be more Rich and more Renown'd.



LETTER

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LETTER IV.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

In the following Letter the Paſſion of Heloiſe *breaks out with more Violence than ever. That which ſhe had receiv'd from* Abelard, *inſtead of fortifying her Reſolutions, ſerv'd only to revive in her Memory all their paſt Endearments and Misfortunes. With this Impreſſion, ſhe writes again to her Husband, and appears now, not ſo much in the Character of a Religious, ſtriving with the Remains of her former Weakneſs, as in that of an unhappy Woman abandon'd to all the Tranſports of Love and Deſpair.*

To *Abelard* her well beloved in Chriſt Jeſus, from *Heloiſe* his well-beloved in the ſame Chriſt Jeſus.

I Read the Letter I received from you with abundance of Impatience: In ſpite of all my Misfortunes, I hoped to find nothing in it beſides Arguments of Comfort. But how ingenious are Lovers in tormenting themſelves! Judge of the exquiſite

exquiſite Senſibility and Force of my Love, by that which cauſes the grief of my Soul. I was diſturb'd at the Superſcription of your Letter; Why did you place the Name of *Heloiſe* before that of *Abelard*? What means this cruel and unjuſt Diſtinction? 'Twas your Name only, the Name of a Father, and of a Husband, which my eager Eyes ſought after. I did not look for my own, which I had much rather, if poſſible, forget, as being the cauſe of your Misfortune. The Rules of Decorum, and the Character of Maſter and Director which you have over me, oppoſed that Ceremonious manner of addreſſing me; and Love commanded you to baniſh it: Alas! you know all this but too well.

Did you write thus to me before cruel Fortune had ruined my Happineſs? I ſee your Heart has deſerted me, and you have made greater Advances in the way of Devotion than I could wiſh: Alas! I am too weak to follow you; condeſcend at leaſt to ſtay for me, and animate me with your Advice. Will you have the Cruelty to abandon me? The fear of this ſtabs my Heart: But the fearful Preſages you make at the latter end of your Letter, thoſe terrible Images you draw of your Death, quite diſtract

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ſtract me. Cruel *Abelard!* you ought to have ſtop'd my Tears, and you make them flow. You ought to have quieted the diſorder of my Heart, and you throw me into Deſpair.

You deſire that after your Death I ſhould take care of your Aſhes, and pay them the laſt Duties. Alas! in what Temper did you conceive theſe mournful Ideas? And how could you deſcribe them to me? Did not the Apprehenſion of cauſing my preſent Death make the Pen drop from your Hand? You did not reflect, I ſuppoſe, upon all thoſe Torments to which you were going to deliver me. Heaven, as ſevere as it has been againſt me, is not in ſo great a degree ſo, as to permit me to live one moment after you. Life, without my *Abelard*, is an unſupportable Puniſhment, and Death a moſt exquiſite Happineſs, if by that means I can be united with him. If Heaven hears the Prayers I continually make for you, your Days will be prolonged, and you will bury me.

Is it not your Part to prepare me by your powerful Exhortations againſt that great Chriſis, which ſhakes the moſt reſolute and confirmed Minds? Is it not your part to receive my laſt Sighs, take care of my

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my Funerals, and give an Account of my Manners and Faith? Who but you can recommend us worthily to God, and by the Fervour and Merit of your Prayers, conduct thoſe Souls to him which you have joined to his Worſhip by ſolemn Contracts? We expect theſe pious Offices from your Paternal Charity. After this you will be free from thoſe Diſquietudes which now diſturb you, and you will quit Life with more Eaſe whenever it ſhall pleaſe God to call you away. You may follow us content with what you have done, and in a full aſſurance of our Happineſs. But 'till then write not to me any ſuch terrible things. Are we not already ſufficiently miſerable? Muſt we aggravate our Sorrows? Our Life here is but a languiſhing Death; will you haſten it? Our preſent Diſgraces employ our Thoughts continually, and ſhall we ſeek for new Arguments of Grief in Futurities? How void of Reaſon are Men, ſaid *Seneca*, to make diſtant Evils preſent by Reflection, and to take pains before Death to loſe all the Comforts of Life?

When you have finiſhed your Courſe here below, you ſay it is your Deſire that your Body be carried to the Houſe of the *Paraclete*; to the intent that being always expoſed to my Eyes,

Eyes, you may be for ever preſent to my Mind; and that your dead Body may ſtrengthen our Piety, and animate our Prayers. Can you think that the Traces you have drawn in my Heart can ever be worn out; or that any length of time can obliterate the Memory we have here of your Benefits? And what time ſhall I find for thoſe Prayers you ſpeak of? alas, I ſhall then be filled with other Cares. Can ſo heavy a Misfortune leave me a moment's Quiet? Can my feeble Reaſon reſiſt ſuch powerful Aſſaults? When I am diſtracted and raving, (if I dare ſay it) even againſt Heaven it ſelf, I ſhall not ſoften it by my Prayers, but rather provoke it by my Cries and Reproaches! But how ſhould I pray? Or how bear up againſt my Grief? I ſhould be more urgent to follow you, than to pay you the ſad Ceremonies of Burial. It is for you, for *Abelard*, that I have reſolved to live; if you are raviſhed from me, what uſe can I make of my miſerable Days? Alas! What Lamentations ſhould I make if Heaven, by a cruel Pity, ſhould preſerve me 'till that moment? When I but think of this laſt Separation, I feel all the Pangs of Death; what ſhall I be then, if I ſhould ſee this dreadful Hour? Forbear therefore to infuſe

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infuse into my Mind such mournful Thoughts, if not for Love, at least for Pity.

You desire me to give my self up to my Duty, and to be wholly God's, to whom I am consecrated. How can I do that, when you frighten me with Apprehensions that continually possess my Mind Day and Night? When an Evil threatens us, and it is impossible to ward it off, why do we give up our selves to the unprofitable fear of it, which is yet even more tormenting than the Evil it self?

What have I to hope for after the loss of you? What can detain me upon Earth, when Death shall have taken away from me all that was dear upon it? I have renounced without difficulty all the Charms of Life, preserving only my Love, and the secret pleasure of thinking incessantly of you, and hearing that you live. And yet, alas! you do not live for me, and I dare not even flatter my self with the hopes that I shall ever enjoy a sight of you more! This is the greatest of my Afflictions: Merciless Fortune! Hast thou not persecuted me enough? Thou dost not give me any Respite; thou hast exhausted all thy Vengeance upon me, and reserved thy self nothing

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thing whereby thou may'ſt appear terrible to others. Thou haſt wearied thy ſelf in tormenting me, and others have nothing now to fear from thy Anger. But to what purpoſe doſt thou ſtill arm thy ſelf againſt me? The Wounds I have already received leave no room for new ones; why cannot I urge thee to kill me? Or doſt thou fear, amidſt the numerous Torments thou heapeſt on me, doſt thou fear that ſuch a Stroke would deliver me from all? Therefore thou preſerveſt me from Death, in order to make me die every moment.

Dear *Abelard*, pity my Deſpair! Was ever any thing ſo miſerable! The higher you raiſed me above other Women who envied me your Love, the more ſenſible am I now of the loſs of your Heart. I was exalted to the top of Happineſs only that I might have a more terrible Fall. Nothing cou'd formerly be compared to my Pleaſures, and nothing now can equal my Miſery. My Glory once raiſed the Envy of my Rivals; my preſent Wretchedneſs moves the Compaſſion of all that ſee me. My Fortune has always been in extremes, ſhe has heaped on me her moſt delightful Favours, that ſhe might load me with the greateſt of her Afflictions. Ingenious in torment-

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tormenting me, ſhe has made the Memory of the Joys I have loſt, an inexhauſtible Spring of my Tears. Love, which poſſeſt was her greateſt Gift, being taken away, occaſions all my Sorrow. In ſhort, her Malice has entirely ſucceeded, and I find my preſent Afflictions proportionably bitter as the Tranſports which charmed me were ſweet.

But what aggravates my Sufferings yet more, is, that we began to be miſerable at a time when we ſeemed the leaſt to deſerve it. While we gave our ſelves up to the Enjoyment of a Criminal Love, nothing oppoſed our vicious Pleaſures. But ſcarce had we retrench'd what was unlawful in our Paſſion, and taken Refuge in Marriage againſt that Remorſe which might have purſu'd us, but the whole Wrath of Heaven fell on us in all its Weight. But how barbarous was your Puniſhment? The very Remembrance makes me ſhake with Horror. Could an outrageous Husband make a Villain ſuffer more that had diſhonoured his Bed? Ah! what right had a cruel Uncle over us? We were joined to each other even before the Altar, which ſhould have protected you from the Rage of your Enemies. Muſt a Wife draw on you that Puniſhment

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niſhment which ought not to fall on any but an Adulterous Lover? Beſides, we were ſeparated; you were buſie in your Exerciſes, and inſtructed a learned Auditory in Myſteries which the greateſt Genius's before you were not able to penetrate; and I, in obedience to you, retired to a Cloiſter. I there ſpent whole Days in thinking of you, and ſometimes meditating on holy Leſſons, to which I endeavoured to apply my ſelf. In this very Junćture you became the Victim of the moſt unhappy Love. You alone expiated the Crime common to us both: You only were puniſhed, tho' both of us were guilty. You, who were leaſt ſo, was the Objećt of the whole Vengeance of a barbarous Man. But why ſhould I rave at your Aſſaſſins? I, wretched I, have ruined you, I have been the Original of all your Misfortunes! Good Heav'n! Why was I born to be the occaſion of ſo Tragical an Accident? How dangerous is it for a great Man to ſuffer himſelf to be moved by our Sex. He ought from his Infancy to be inured to Inſenſibility of Heart, againſt all our Charms. *Hearken, my Son,* (ſaid formerly the wiſeſt of Men) *attend and keep my Inſtructions; if a beautiful Woman by her Looks endeavour to intice thee, permit not thy ſelf to be overcome*

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come by a corrupt Inclination; reject the Poiſon ſhe offers, and follow not the Paths which ſhe directs. Her Houſe is the Gate of Deſtruction and Death. I have long examined things, and have found that Death it ſelf is a leſs dangerous Evil than Beauty. 'Tis the Shipwreck of Liberty, a fatal Snare, from which it is impoſſible ever to get free. 'Twas Woman which threw down the firſt Man from that glorious condition in which Heaven had placed him. She who was created in order to partake of his Happineſs, was the ſole Cauſe of his Ruin. How bright had been thy Glory, *Sampſon*, if thy Heart had been as firm againſt the Charms of *Dalilah*, as againſt the Weapons of the *Philiſtines*. A Woman diſarmed and betrayed thee, who hadſt been a glorious Conqueror of Armies. Thou ſawſt thy ſelf delivered into the Hands of thy Enemies; thou waſt deprived of thy Eyes, thoſe Inlets of Love into thy Soul: Diſtracted and deſpairing didſt thou die, without any Conſolation but that of involving thy Enemies in thy Deſtruction. *Solomon*, that he might pleaſe Women, forſook the Care of pleaſing God. That King, whoſe Wiſdom Princes came from all Parts to admire, he whom God had choſen to build him a Temple, aban-

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don'd the Worſhip of thoſe very Altars he had defended, and proceeded to ſuch a pitch of Folly as even to burn Incenſe to Idols. *Job* had no Enemy more cruel than his Wife; what Temptations did he not bear? The evil Spirit who had declared himſelf his Perſecutor, employed a Woman as an Inſtrument to ſhake his Conſtancy. And the ſame evil Spirit made *Heloiſe* an Inſtrument to ruin *Abelard*! All the poor Comfort I have is, that I am not the voluntary Cauſe of your Misfortunes. I have not betray'd you; but my Conſtancy and Love have been deſtructive to you. If I have committed a Crime in having lov'd you with Conſtancy, I ſhall never be able to repent of that Crime. Indeed I gave my ſelf up too much to the Captivity of thoſe ſoft Errors into which my riſing Paſſion ſeduced me. I have endeavour'd to pleaſe you, even at the Expence of my Virtue, and therefore deſerve thoſe Pains I feel. My guilty Tranſports cou'd not but have a Tragical End. As ſoon as I was perſwaded of your Love, alas, I ſcarce delay'd a moment reſigning my ſelf to all your Proteſtations: To be beloved by *Abelard*, was, in my Eſteem, too much Glory, and I too impatiently deſired it, not to believe it immediately. I endea-

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endeavoured at nothing but convincing you of my utmoſt Paſſion. I made no uſe of thoſe defences of Diſdain and ſtrict Honour; thoſe Enemies of Pleaſure which tyrannize over our Sex, made in me but a weak and unprofitable Reſiſtance. I Sacrificed all to my Love, and I forc'd my Duty to yield to the Ambition of making happy the moſt gallant and learned Perſon of the Age. If any Conſideration had been able to ſtop me, it would have been without doubt the Intereſt of my Love. I fear'd leaſt having nothing further for you to deſire, your Paſſion might become languid, and you might ſeek for new Pleaſures in ſome new Conqueſt. But it was eaſie for you to cure me of a Suſpicion ſo oppoſite to to my own Inclination. I ought to have foreſeen other more certain Evils; and to have conſider'd that the Idea of loſt Enjoyments wou'd be the trouble of my whole Life.

How happy ſhould I be, could I waſh out with my Tears the Memory of thoſe Pleaſures, which yet I think of with Delight? At leaſt I will exert ſome generous Endeavour, and by ſmothering in my Heart thoſe Deſires to which the frailty of my Nature may give Birth, I will exerciſe the

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ſame Torments upon my ſelf, as the Rage of your Enemies has made you ſuffer. I will endeavour by that means to ſatisfie you at leaſt, if I cannot appeaſe an angry God. For to ſhew you what a deplorable Condition I am in, and how far my Repentance is from being available, I dare even accuſe Heaven every moment of Cruelty, for delivering you into thoſe Snares which were prepared for you. My Repinings kindle the Divine Wrath, when I ſhou'd endeavour to draw down Mercy.

In order to expiate a Crime, 'tis not ſufficient that we bear the Puniſhment; whatever we ſuffer is accounted as nothing, if the Paſſions ſtill continue, and the Heart is inflam'd with the ſame Deſires. 'Tis an eaſie matter to confeſs a Weakneſs, and to inflict ſome Puniſhment upon our ſelves; but 'tis the laſt Violence to our Nature to extinguiſh the Memory of Pleaſures, which by a ſweet Habit have gain'd abſolute Poſſeſſion of our Minds. How many Perſons do we obſerve who make an outward Confeſſion of their Faults, yet far from being afflicted for them, take a new Pleaſure in the relating them. Bitterneſs of Heart ought to accompany the Confeſſion of the Mouth, yet that very rarely happens. I, who have

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have experienced ſo many Pleaſures in loving you, feel, in ſpight of my ſelf, that I cannot repent of them, nor forbear enjoying them over again as much as is poſſible, by recollecting them in my Memory. Whatever Endeavours I uſe, on whatever ſide I turn me, the ſweet Idea ſtill purſues me, and every Object brings to my Mind what I ought to forget. During the ſtill Night, when my Heart ought to be quiet in the midſt of Sleep, which ſuſpends the greateſt Diſturbances, I cannot avoid thoſe Illuſions my Heart entertains. I think I am ſtill with my dear *Abelard*. I ſee him, I ſpeak to him, and hear him anſwer. Charmed with each other, we quit our Philoſophic Studies to entertain our ſelves with our Paſſion. Sometimes too I ſeem to be a Witneſs of the bloody Enterprize of your Enemies; I oppoſe their Fury, I fill our Apartment with fearful Cries, and in the moment I awake in Tears. Even into Holy Places before the Altar I carry with me the Memory of our guilty Loves. They are my whole buſineſs; and far from lamenting for having been ſeduced, I ſigh for having loſt them?

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I remember (for nothing is forgot by Lovers) the Time and Place in which you firſt declared your Love to me, and ſwore you would love me 'till Death. Your Words, your Oaths, are all graven in my Heart. The Diſorder of my Diſcourſe diſcovers to every one the Trouble of my Mind. My Sighs betray me; and your Name is continually in my Mouth. When I am in this condition, why doſt not thou, O Lord! pity my Weakneſs, and ſtrengthen me by thy Grace? You are happy, *Abelard*, this Grace has prevented you; and your Misfortune has been the Occaſion of your finding Reſt. The Puniſhment of your Body, has cured the deadly Wounds of your Soul. The Tempeſt has driven you into the Haven. God, who ſeemed to lay his Hand heavily upon you, ſought only to help you: He is a Father Chaſtizing, and not an Enemy Revenging; a wiſe Phyſician, putting you to ſome Pain in order to preſerve your Life. I am a thouſand times more to be lamented than you; I have a thouſand Paſſions to combat with. I muſt reſiſt thoſe Fires which Love kindles in a young Heart. Our Sex is nothing but Weakneſs, and I have the greater difficulty to defend my ſelf, becauſe the Enemy

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that attacks me pleaſes me; I doat on the Danger which threatens me, how then can I avoid falling?

In the midſt of theſe Struggles, I endeavour at leaſt to conceal my Weakneſs from thoſe you have intruſted to my Care. All who are about me admire my Virtue, but could their Eyes penetrate into my Heart, what would they not diſcover? My Paſſions there are in a Rebellion; I preſide over others, but cannot rule my ſelf. I have but a falſe Covering, and this ſeeming Virtue is a real Vice. Men judge me praiſeworthy, but I am guilty before God, from whoſe All-ſeeing Eye nothing is hid, and who views thro' all their foldings the Secrets of all Hearts. I cannot eſcape his Diſcovery. And yet it is a great deal to me to maintain even this appearance of Virtue. This troubleſome Hypocriſie is in ſome ſort commendable. I give no Scandal to the World, which is ſo eaſie to catch bad Impreſſions. I do not ſhake the Virtue of theſe feeble Ones who are under my Conduct. With my Heart full of the Love of Man, I exhort them at leaſt to love only God: Charmed with the Pomp of worldly Pleaſures, I endeavour to ſhew them that they are all Deceit and Vanity. I have juſt

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Strength enough to conceal from them my Inclinations, and I look upon that as a powerful Effect of Grace. If it is not ſufficient to make me embrace Virtue, 'tis enough to keep me from committing Ill.

And yet it is vain to endeavour to ſeparate theſe two things. They muſt be guilty who merit nothing; and they depart from Virtue who delay to approach it. Beſides, we ought to have no other Motive than the Love of God; alas! what can I then hope for? I own, to my confuſion, I fear more the offending a Man, than the provoking God, and ſtudy leſs to pleaſe him than you. Yes, 'twas your Command only, and not a ſincere Vocation, as is imagined, that ſhut me up in theſe Cloiſters. I ſought to give you Eaſe, and not to ſanctifie my ſelf. How unhappy am I? I tear my ſelf from all that pleaſes me; I bury my ſelf here alive, I exerciſe my ſelf in the moſt rigid Faſtings, and ſuch Severities as cruel Laws impoſe on us; I feed my ſelf with Tears and Sorrows; and notwithſtanding this, I deſerve nothing for all the Hardſhips which I ſuffer. My falſe Piety has long deceived you as well as others; you have thought me eaſie,

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yet I was more disturbed than ever. You perswaded your self I was wholly taken up with my Duty, yet I had no business but Love. Under this mistake you desire my Prayers; alas! I must expect yours. Do not presume upon my Virtue and my Care. I am wavering, and you must fix me by your Advice. I am yet feeble, you must sustain and guide me by your Counsel.

What Occasion had you to praise me? Praise is often hurtful to those on whom it is bestowed. A secret Vanity springs up in the Heart, blinds us, and conceals from us Wounds that are ill cured. A Seducer flatters us, and at the same time aims at our Destruction. A sincere Friend disguises nothing from us, and far from passing a light Hand over the Wound, makes us feel it the more intensly, by applying Remedies. Why do you not deal after this manner with me? Will you be esteemed a base dangerous Flatterer; or if you chance to see any thing commendable in me, have you no fear that Vanity, which is so natural to all Women, should quite efface it? But let us not judge of Virtue by outward Appearances, for then

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the Reprobate as well as the Elect may lay claim to it. An artful Impoſtor may by his Addreſs gain more Admiration, than the true Zeal of a Saint.

The Heart of Man is a Labyrinth whoſe Windings are very difficult to be diſcover'd. The Praiſes you give me are the more dangerous, in regard that I love the Perſon who gives them. The more I deſire to pleaſe you, the readier am I to believe all the Merit you attribute to me. Ah, think rather how to ſupport my Weakneſſes by wholſome Remonſtrances! Be rather fearful than confident of my Salvation; ſay our Virtue is founded upon Weakneſs, and that thoſe only will be crowned, who have fought with the greateſt Difficulties: But I ſeek not for that Crown which is the Reward of Victory, I am content to avoid only the Danger. It is eaſier to keep off, than to win a Battle. There are ſeveral Degrees in Glory, and I am not ambitious of the higheſt; thoſe I leave to Souls of great Courage, who have been often Victorious. I ſeek not to Conquer, out of fear leaſt I ſhould be overcome: Happy enough, if I can eſcape Shipwreck, and at laſt gain the Port. Heaven com-

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mands me to renounce that fatal Paſſion which unites me to you; but oh! my Heart will never be able to conſent to it. Adieu.

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LETTER V.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

Heloise *had been dangerously Ill at the Convent of the* Paraclete: *Immediately upon her Recovery, she wrote this Letter to* Abelard. *She seems now to have disengaged her self from him, and to have resolved to think of nothing but Repentance; yet discovers some Emotions, which make it doubtful, whether Devotion had entirely triumphed over her Passion.*

EAR *Abelard*, you expect perhaps that I should accuse you of Negligence. You have not answered my last Letter, and thanks to Heaven, in the condition I now am, 'tis a Happiness to me that you shew so much Insensibility for the fatal Passion which had engaged me to you; at last, *Abelard*, you have lost *Heloise* for ever: Notwithstanding all the Oaths I made to think of nothing but you only, and to

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be entertain'd with nothing but you; I have baniſhed you from my Thoughts, I have forgot you. Thou charming Idea of a Lover I once adored, thou wilt no more be my Happineſs! Dear Image of *Abelard*! thou wilt no more follow me every where, I will no more remember thee. O celebrated Merit of a Man, who in ſpight of his Enemies, is the Wonder of his Age! O enchanting Pleaſures to which *Heloiſe* entirely reſign'd her ſelf, you, you have been my Tormentors. I confeſs, *Abelard*, without a Bluſh, my Infidelity: Let my Inconſtancy teach the World that there is no depending upon the Promiſes of Women; they are all ſubject to change. This troubles you, *Abelard*; this News without doubt ſurprizes you; you could never imagine *Heloiſe* ſhould be inconſtant. She was prejudiced by ſo a ſtrong Inclination to you, that you cannot conceive how Time could alter it. But be undeceived, I am going to diſcover to you my Falſeneſs, tho' inſtead of reproaching me, I perſwade my ſelf you will ſhed Tears of Joy. When I ſhall have told you what Rival hath raviſhed my Heart from you, you will praiſe my Inconſtancy, and will pray this Rival to fix it: By this you may judge that 'tis God alone

alone that takes *Heloise* from you. Yes, my Dear *Abelard*, he gives my Mind that Tranquility which a quick Remembrance of our Misfortunes wou'd not suffer me to enjoy. Just Heaven! What other Rival could take me from you? Could you imagine it possible for any Mortal to blot you from my Heart? Could you think me guilty of Sacrificing the Virtuous and Learned *Abelard* to any other but to God? No, I believe you have done me Justice in this Point. I question not but you are impatient to know what Means God used to accomplish so great an End; I will tell you, and wonder at the secret ways of Providence. Some few days after you sent me your last Letter I fell dangerously Ill, the Physicians gave me over; and I expected certain Death. Then it was, that my Passion, which always before seemed innocent, appeared criminal to me. My Memory represented faithfully to me all the past Actions of my Life, and I confess to you, my Love was the only Pain I felt. Death, which 'till then I had always consider'd as at a Distance, now presented it self to me such as it appears to Sinners. I began to dread the Wrath of God, now I was going to experience it; and I repented

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I had made no better uſe of his Grace. Thoſe tender Letters I have wrote to you, and thoſe paſſionate Converſations I have had with you, gave me as much Pain now, as they formerly did Pleaſure. Ah miſerable *Heloiſe*, ſaid I, if it is a Crime to give ones ſelf up to ſuch ſoft Tranſports; and if after this Life is ended, Puniſhment certainly follows them, why didſt thou not reſiſt ſo dangerous an Inclination? Think on the Tortures that are prepared for thee, conſider with Terror that ſtore of Torments, and recollect at the ſame time thoſe Pleaſures which thy deluded Soul thought ſo entrancing. Ah, purſued I, doſt thou not almoſt deſpair for having rioted in ſuch falſe Pleaſures? What a Folly was it to lead ſuch a ſort of Life? In ſhort, *Abelard*, imagine all the Remorſe of Mind I ſuffered, and you will not be aſtoniſhed at my Change.

Solitude is inſupportable to a Mind which is not eaſie, its Troubles increaſe in the midſt of Silence, and Retirement heightens them. Since I have been ſhut up within theſe Walls, I have done nothing but weep for our Misfortunes. This Cloyſter has reſounded with my Cries, and like a Wretch condemned to eternal Slavery, I have worn out my Days in Grief and Sighing. Inſtead of fulfilling God's merciful Deſign upon me,

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me; I have offended him; I have look'd upon this Sacred Refuge, like a frightful Prison, and have born with Unwillingness the Yoke of the Lord. Instead of sanctifying my self by a Life of Penitence, I have confirm'd my Reprobation. What a fatal wandring! But, *Abelard*, I have torn off the Bandage which blinded me, and if I dare rely upon the Emotions which I have felt, I have made my self worthy of your Esteem. You are no more that Amorous *Abelard*, who to gain a private Conversation with me by Night, used incessantly to contrive new ways to deceive the Vigilance of our Observers. The Misfortune which happened to you after so many happy Moments, gave you a Horror for Vice, and you instantly consecrated the rest of your Days to Virtue, and seemed to submit to this Necessity willingly. I indeed, more tender than you, and more sensible of soft Pleasures, bore this Misfortune with extream Impatience; you have heard my Exclamations against your Enemies. You have seen my whole Resentment in those Letters I wrote to you. 'Twas this without doubt which deprived me of the Esteem of my *Abelard*: You were alarm'd at my Transports, and if you will confess the Truth,

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Truth, you perhaps despair'd of my Salvation. You could not foresee that *Heloise* would conquer so reigning a Passion; but you have been mistaken, *Abelard*; my Weakness, when supported by Grace, hath not hinder'd me from obtaining a compleat Victory. Restore me then to your good Opinion; your own Piety ought to solicite you to this.

But what secret Trouble rises in my Soul, what unthought of Motion opposes the Resolution I have formed of sighing no more for *Abelard*? Just Heaven! Have I not yet triumphed over my Love? Unhappy *Heloise!* as long as thou drawest a Breath it is decreed thou must love *Abelard*; weep, unfortunate Wretch that thou art, thou never hadst a more just occasion. Now I ought to die with Grief; Grace had overtaken me, and I had promised to be faithful to it, but I now perjure my self, and sacrifice even Grace to *Abelard*. This sacrilegious Sacrifice fills up the Measure of my Iniquities. After this can I hope God should open to me the Treasures of his Mercy? Have I not tired out his Forgiveness? I began to offend him from the moment I first saw *Abelard*; an unhappy Sympathy engaged us both in a Criminal Commerce; and God raised

raised us up an Enemy to separate us. I lament and hate the Misfortune which hath lighted upon us, and adore the Cause. Ah, I ought rather to explain this Accident as the secret Ordinance of Heaven, which disapproved of our Engagement, and apply myself to extirpate my Passion. How much better were it entirely to forget the Object of it, than to preserve the Memory of it, so fatal to the quiet of my Life and Salvation? Great God! Shall *Abelard* always possess my Thoughts, can I never free myself from those Chains which bind me to him? But perhaps I am unreasonably afraid; Virtue directs all my Motions, and they are all subject to Grace. Fear no more, dear *Abelard*, I have no longer any of those Sentiments, which being described in my Letters have occasioned you so much Trouble. I will no more endeavour, by the Relation of those Pleasures our new-born Passion gave us, to awaken that criminal Fondness you may have for me. I free you from all your Oaths; forget the Names of Lover and Husband, but keep always that of Father. I expect no more from you those tender Protestations, and those Letters so proper to keep up the Commerce of Love. I demand nothing of you but spiritual Advice

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and wholesome Directions. The Path of Holiness, however Thorny it may be, will yet appear agreeable when I walk in your Steps. You will always find me ready to follow you. I shall read with more Pleasure the Letters in which you shall describe to me the Advantages of Virtue, than ever I did those by which you so artfully instilled the fatal Poison of our Passion. You cannot now be silent, without a Crime. When I was possess'd with so violent a Love, and press'd you so earnestly to write to me, how many Letters did I send you before I cou'd obtain one from you? You deny'd me in my Misery the only Comfort which was left me, because you thought it pernicious. You endeavour'd by Severities to force me to forget you, nor can I blame you; but now you have nothing to fear. A lucky Disease, which Providence seem'd to have chastiz'd me with for my Sanctification, hath done what all human Efforts, and your Cruelty, in vain attempted. I see now the Vanity of that Happiness which we had set our Hearts upon, as if we were never to have lost it. What Fears, what Uneasiness have we been obliged to suffer! No, Lord, there is no Pleasure upon Earth, but that which Virtue gives!

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The Heart amidſt all Worldly Delights feels a Sting, 'tis uneaſie, and reſtleſs, 'till fixed on thee. What have I not ſuffer'd, *Abelard*, while I kept alive in my Retirement thoſe Fires which ruined me in the World? I ſaw with Horror the Walls which ſurrounded me, the Hours appear'd as long Years. I repented a thouſand times for having buried my ſelf here. But ſince Grace has opened my Eyes all the Scene is changed. Solitude looks charming, and the Tranquility which I behold here enters my very Heart. In the Satisfaction of doing my Duty I feel a Pleaſure, above all that Riches, Pomp, or Senſuality could afford. My Quiet has indeed coſt me dear, I have bought it even at the Price of my Love. I have offer'd a violent Sacrifice, and which ſeem'd above my Power. I have torn you from my Heart, and be not Jealous; God reigns there in your ſtead, who ought always to have poſſeſs'd it entire. Be content with having a place in my Mind, which you ſhall never loſe; I ſhall always take a ſecret Pleaſure in thinking of you, and eſteem it a Glory to obey thoſe Rules you ſhall give me.

This very moment I receive a Letter from you; I will read it, and anſwer it immediately.

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diately. You ſhall ſee by my Exactneſs in writing to you, that you are always dear to me. —— You very obligingly reproach me for delaying ſo long to write you any News; My Illneſs muſt excuſe that. I omit no opportunities of giving you Marks of my Remembrance. I thank you for the Uneaſineſs you ſay my Silence cauſed you, and the kind Fears you expreſs concerning my Health. Yours, you tell me, is but weakly, and you thought lately you ſhou'd have dy'd. With what Indifference, cruel Man, do you acquaint me with a thing ſo certain to afflict me? I told you in my former Letter how unhappy I ſhould be if you died; and if you loved me, you would moderate the Rigour of your Auſtere Life. I repreſented to you the occaſion I had for your Advice, and conſequently the Reaſon there was you ſhould take care of your ſelf. But I will not tire you with the repetition of the ſame things. *You deſire us not to forget you in our Prayers.* Ah, dear *Abelard*, you may depend upon the Zeal of this Society, 'tis devoted to you, and you cannot juſtly charge it with forgetfulneſs. You are our Father, we your Children: You are our Guide, and we reſign our ſelves with aſſurance in your Piety. You Command, we Obey; we

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will faithfully execute what you have prudently directed. We impose no Penance on our selves but what you recommend, lest we should rather follow an indiscreet Zeal than solid Virtue. In a word, nothing is thought rightly done, if without *Abelard's* Approbation. You inform me of one thing that perplexes me, that you have heard that some of our Sisters give bad Examples, and that there is a general Looseness amongst them. Ought this to seem strange to you, who know how Monasteries are fill'd up now-a-days? Do Fathers consult the Inclinations of their Children when they settle them? Are not Interest and Policy their only Rules? This is the Reason that Monasteries are often filled with those who are a Scandal to them. But I conjure you to tell me what are the Irregularities you have heard of, and to teach me a proper Remedy for them. I have not yet observed that Looseness you mention, when I have, I will take due care. I walk my Rounds every Night, and make those I catch abroad return to their Chambers; for I remember all the Adventures which happen'd in the Monasteries near *Paris*. You end your Letter with a general deploring of your Unhappiness, and with for Death as the end of a

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troubleſome Life. Is it poſſible a Genius ſo great as yours ſhould never get above his paſt Misfortunes? What would the World ſay ſhould they read your Letters as I do? Wou'd they conſider the noble Motive of your Retirement, or not rather think you had ſhut your ſelf up only to lament the condition to which my Uncle's Revenge had reduc'd you? What would your young Pupils ſay who come ſo far to hear you, and prefer your ſevere Lectures to the ſoftneſs of a Worldly Life, if they ſhould ſee you ſecretly a Slave to your Paſſions, and ſenſible of all thoſe Weakneſſes from which your Rules can ſecure them? This *Abelard* they ſo much admire, this great Perſonage which guides them, wou'd loſe his Fame, and become the Scorn of his Pupils. If theſe Reaſons are not ſufficient to give you Conſtancy in your Misfortunes, caſt your Eyes upon me, and admire my Reſolution of ſhutting my ſelf up by your Example. I was young when we were ſeparated, and (if I dare believe what you were always telling me) worthy of any Gentleman's Affections. If I had loved nothing in *Abelard* but ſenſual Pleaſure, a thouſand agreeable young Men might have comforted me upon my Loſs of him. You know what

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I have done, excuſe me therefore from repeating it; think of thoſe Aſſurances I gave you of loving you with the utmoſt Tenderneſs. I dried your Tears with Kiſſes, and becauſe you were leſs powerful, I became leſs reſerv'd. Ah if you had loved with Delicacy, the Oaths I made, the Tranſports I accompany'd them with, the innocent Careſſes I profuſely gave you, all this ſure might have comforted you. Had you obſerv'd me to grow by degrees indifferent to you, you might have had reaſon to deſpair, but you never receiv'd greater Marks of my Paſſion, than after that cruel Revenge upon you.

Let me ſee no more in your Letters, dear *Abelard*, ſuch Murmurs againſt Fortune, you are not the only one ſhe has Perſecuted, and you ought to forget her Outrages. What a Shame is it for a Philoſopher not to be comforted for an Accident which might happen to any Man. Govern your ſelf by my Example. I was born with violent Paſſions; I daily ſtrive with the moſt tender Emotions, and glory in triumphing and ſubjecting them to Reaſon; Muſt a weak Mind fortifie one that is ſo much ſuperior? But whither am I tranſported? Is this Diſcourſe directed to my

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dear *Abelard*? One that practiſes all thoſe Virtues he teaches. If you complain of Fortune, 'tis not ſo much that you feel her ſtrokes, as that you cannot ſhew your Enemies how much to blame they were in attempting to hurt you. Leave them, *Abelard*, to exhauſt their Malice, and continue to Charm your Auditors. Diſcover thoſe Treaſures of Learning Heaven ſeems to have reſerved for you; your Enemies, ſtruck with the Splendor of your Reaſoning, will do you Juſtice. How happy ſhould I be could I ſee all the World entirely perſuaded of your Probity as I am. Your Learning is allow'd by all the World; your greateſt Enemies confeſs you are ignorant of nothing that the Mind of Man is capable of knowing.

My dear Husband! (this is the laſt time I ſhall uſe that Expreſſion) ſhall I never ſee you again? Shall I never have the Pleaſure of embracing you before Death? What doſt thou ſay, wretched *Heloiſe*, doſt thou know what thou deſireſt? Canſt thou behold thoſe lively Eyes, without recollecting thoſe amorous Glances which have been ſo fatal to thee? Canſt thou view that Majeſtick Air of *Abelard*, without entertaining a Jealouſie of every one that ſees ſo charming a Man? That

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That Mouth which cannot be look'd upon without Deſire; in ſhort, all the Perſon of *Abelard* cannot be view'd by any Woman without danger. Deſire therefore no more to ſee *Abelard*; if the Memory of him has cauſed thee ſo much trouble, *Heloiſe*, what will not his Preſence do? What Deſires will it not excite in thy Soul? How will it be poſſible for thee to keep thy Reaſon at the ſight of ſo amiable a Man? I will own to you what makes the greateſt Pleaſure I have in my Retirement. After having paſs'd the Day in thinking of you, full of the dear Idea, I give my ſelf up at Night to ſleep: Then it is that *Heloiſe*, who dares not without trembling think of you by Day, reſigns her ſelf entirely to the Pleaſure of hearing you, and ſpeaking to you. I ſee you, *Abelard*, and glut my Eyes with the ſight; ſometimes you entertain me with the Story of your ſecret Troubles and Grievances, and create in me a ſenſible Sorrow; ſometimes forgetting the perpetual Obſtacles to our Deſires, you preſs me to make you happy, and I eaſily yield to your Tranſports. Sleep gives you what your Enemies Rage has deprived you of; and our Souls, animated with the ſame Paſſion, are ſenſible of the ſame Pleaſure. But oh you delightful Illuſions, ſoft Errors,

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how ſoon do you vaniſh away? At my awaking I open my Eyes and ſee no *Abelard*; I ſtretch out my Arm to take hold of him, but he is not there; I call him, he hears me not. What a Fool am I to tell you my Dreams, who are inſenſible of theſe Pleaſures? But do you, *Abelard*, never ſee *Heloiſe* in your Sleep? How does ſhe appear to you? Do you entertain her with the ſame tender Language as formerly, when *Fulbert* committed her to your Care? When you awake, are you pleaſed or ſorry? Pardon me, *Abelard*, pardon a miſtaking Lover. I muſt no more expect that Vivacity from you, which once animated all your Actions. 'Tis no more time to require from you a perfect Correſpondence of Deſires. We have bound our ſelves to ſevere Auſterities, and muſt follow them, let them coſt us ever ſo dear. Let us think of our Duties in theſe Rigors, and make a good uſe of that Neceſſity which keeps us ſeparate. You, *Abelard*, will happily finiſh your Courſe, your Deſires and Ambitions will be no Obſtacle to your Salvation. *Heloiſe* only muſt lament, ſhe only muſt weep without being certain whether all her Tears will be available or not to her Salvation.

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I had like to have ended my Letter without acquainting you with what happened here a few days ago. A young Nun, who was one of thoſe who are forced to take up with a Convent without any Examination whether it will ſuit with their Tempers, is, by a Stratagem I know nothing of, eſcaped, and, as they ſay, fled with a young Gentleman ſhe was in Love with, into *England*. I have ordered all the Houſe to conceal the matter. Ah *Abelard*! if you were near us theſe Diſorders would not happen. All the Siſters, charmed with ſeeing and hearing you, would think of nothing but practiſing your Rules and Directions. The young Nun had never formed ſo criminal a Deſign as that of breaking her Vows, had you been at our Head to exhort us to live holily. If your Eyes were Witneſſes of our Actions, they would be innocent. When we ſlipt, you would lift us up and eſtabliſh us by your Counſels; we ſhould march in ſure Steps in the rough Paths of Virtue. I begin to perceive, *Abelard*, that I take too much Pleaſure in writing to you. I ought to burn my Letter. It ſhews you I am ſtill engaged in a deep Paſſion for you, tho' at the beginning of it I deſign'd to perſuade you the contrary; I

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am ſenſible of the Motions both of Grace and Paſſion, and by turns yield to each. Have pity, *Abelard*, of the Condition to which you have brought me, and make in ſome meaſure the latter Days of my Life as quiet, as the firſt have been uneaſie and diſturbed.

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LETTER VI.

ABELARD *to* HELOISE.

Abelard *having at last conquer'd the Remains of his unhappy Passion, had determin'd to put an End to so dangerous a Correspondence as that between* Heloise *and himself. The following Letter therefore, tho' written with no less Concern than his former, is free from Mixtures of a worldly Passion, and is full of the warmest Sentiments of Piety, and the most moving Exhortations.*

WRITE no more to me, *Heloise*, write no more to me; 'tis time to end a Commerce which makes our Mortifications of no Advantage to us. We retired from the World to Sanctifie our selves; and by a Conduct directly contrary to Christian Morality, we become odious to Jesus Christ. Let us no more deceive our selves; by flattering our selves with the remembrance of our past Pleasures, we shall make our Lives troublesome,

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and we shall be incapable of relishing the Sweets of Solitude. Let us make a good use of our Austerities, and no longer preserve the Ideas of our Crimes amongst the Severities of Penitence. Let a Mortification of Body and Mind, a strict Fasting, continual Solitude, Profound and Holy Meditations, and a sincere Love of God, succeed our former Irregularities.

Let us try to carry Religious Perfection to a very difficult Point. 'Tis beautiful to find in Christianity Minds so disengaged from the Earth, from the Creatures and themselves, that they seem to act independently of those Bodies they are joined to, and to use them as their Slaves. We can never raise our selves to too great heights, when God is the Object. Be our Endeavours never so great, they will always come short of reaching that exalted Divinity, which even our Apprehensions cannot reach. Let us act for God's Glory independent of the Creatures or our selves, without any regard to our own Desires, or the Sentiments of others. Were we in this temper of Mind, *Heloise*, I would willingly make my Abode at the *Paraclete*. My earnest care for a House I have founded, would draw a thousand Blessings on it. I would instruct

it by my Words, and animate it by my Example. I would watch over the Lives of my Sisters, and would command nothing but what I my self would perform. I would direct you to Pray, Meditate, Labour, and keep Vows of Silence; and I would my self Pray, Meditate, Labour, and be Silent.

However when I spoke, it should be to lift you up when you should fall, to strengthen you in your Weaknesses, to enlighten you in that Darkness and Obscurity which might at any time surprize you. I would comfort you under those Severities used by Persons of great Virtue. I would moderate the Vivacity of your Zeal and Piety, and give your Virtue an even temperament: I would point out those Duties which you ought to know, and satisfie you in those Doubts which the Weakness of your Reason might occasion. I would be your Master and Father; and by a marvelous Talent, I would become lively, slow, soft, or severe, according to the different Characters of those I should guide in the painful Path of Christian Perfection.

But whither does my vain Imagination carry me? Ah, *Heloise!* how far are we from such a happy Temper? Your Heart still burns with that fatal Fire which you

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cannot extinguish, and mine is full of Trouble and Uneasiness. Think not, *Heloise*, that I enjoy here a perfect Peace; I will, for the last time, open my Heart to you; I am not yet disengaged from you; I fight against my excessive Tenderness for you, yet in spite of all my Endeavours, the remaining Frailty makes me but too sensible of your Sorrows, and gives me a share in them. Your Letters have indeed moved me, I could not read with indifference Characters wrote by that dear Hand. I sigh, I weep, and all my Reason is scarce sufficient to conceal my Weakness from my Pupils. This, unhappy *Heloise!* is the miserable Condition of *Abelard*. The World, which generally errs in its Notions, thinks I am easie, and as if I had loved only in you the gratification of Sense, imagine I have now forgot you; but what a mistake is this! People indeed were not mistaken in thinking when we separated, that Shame and Grief for having been so cruelly used made me abandon the World. 'Twas not, as you know, a sincere Repentance for having offended God, which inspired me with a design of Retiring: However, I consider'd the Accident which happen'd to us as a secret Design of Providence, to punish our

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our Crimes; and only look'd upon *Fulbert* as the Instrument of Divine Vengeance. Grace drew me into an *Asylum*, where I might yet have remain'd, if the Rage of my Enemies would have permitted: I have endured all their Persecutions, not doubting but God himself raised them up in order to purifie me.

When he saw me perfectly Obedient to his Holy Will, he permitted that I should justifie my Doctrine; I made its Purity publick, and shew'd in the end that my Faith was not only Orthodox, but also perfectly clear from even the suspicion of Novelty.

I should be happy if I had none to fear but my Enemies, and no other hindrance to my Salvation but their Calumny; but *Heloise*, you make me tremble, your Letters declare to me that you are enslaved to a fatal Passion; and yet if you cannot conquer it, you cannot be saved; and what part would you have me take in this Case? Would you have me stifle the Inspirations of the Holy Ghost? Shall I, to sooth you, dry up those Tears which the Evil Spirit makes you shed? Shall this be the Fruit of my Meditations? No, let us be more firm in our Resolutions; we have not retired

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but in order to lament our Sins, and to gain Heaven, let us then resign our selves to God with all our Heart.

I know every thing in the beginning is difficult, but it is glorious to undertake the beginning of a great Action, and that Glory increases proportionably, as the difficulties are more considerable. We ought upon this account to surmount bravely all Obstacles which might hinder us in the Practice of Christian Virtue. In a Monastery Men are proved as Gold in the Furnace. No one can continue long there, unless he bear worthily the Yoke of our Lord.

Attempt to break those shameful Chains which bind you to the Flesh, and if by the Assistance of Grace you are so happy as to accomplish this, I entreat you to think of me in your Prayers. Endeavour with all your Strength to be the Pattern of a perfect Christian; it is difficult, I confess, but not impossible; and I expect this beautiful Triumph from your teachable Disposition. If your first Endeavours prove weak, give not your self up to Despair; that would be Cowardice; besides, I would have you informed, that you must necessarily take great Pains, because you strive to conquer a terrible

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rible Enemy, to extinguiſh a raging Fire, and to reduce to Subjection your deareſt Affections; you muſt fight againſt your own Deſires, be not therefore preſs'd down with the Weight of your corrupt Nature. You have to do with a cunning Adverſary, who will uſe all means to ſeduce you; be always upon your Guard. While we live we are expoſed to Temptations; this made a great Saint ſay, that *the whole Life of Man was a Temptation*; the Devil, who never ſleeps, walks continually around us, in order to ſurprize us on ſome un-guarded ſide, and enters into our Soul to deſtroy it.

However Perfect any one may be, yet he may fall into Temptations, and perhaps into ſuch as may be uſeful. Nor is it wonderful that Man ſhould never be exempt from them, becauſe he always hath in himſelf their Source, Concupiſcence; ſcarce are we delivered from one Temptation, but another attacks us. Such is the Lot of the Poſterity of *Adam*, that they ſhould always have ſomething to ſuffer becauſe they have forfeited their Primitive Happineſs. We vainly flatter our ſelves that we ſhall conquer Temptations by flying; if we join not Patience and Humility, we ſhall torment our ſelves to no purpoſe. We ſhall more cer-

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certainly compass our End by imploring God's Assistance, than by using any Means drawn from our selves.

Be constant, *Heloise*, trust in God, and you will fall into few Temptations; whenever they shall come, stifle them in their Birth; let them not take Root in your Heart. Apply Remedies to a Disease, said an Ancient, in its beginning, for when it hath gain'd strength, Medicines will be unavailable; Temptations have their Degrees, they are at first mere Thoughts, and do not appear dangerous; the Imagination receives them without any Fears; a Pleasure is form'd out of them, we pause upon it, and at last we yield to it.

Do you now, *Heloise*, applaud my Design of making you walk in the Steps of the Saints? Do my words give you any Relish for Penitence? Have you not Remorse for your Wandrings, and do you not wish you could like *Magdalen* wash our Saviour's Feet with your Tears? If you have not yet these ardent Emotions, pray that he would inspire them. I shall never cease to recommend you in my Prayers, and always beseech him to assist you in your Design of dying holily. You have quitted

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the World, and what Object was worthy to detain you there? Lift up your Eyes always to him to whom you have conſecrated the reſt of your Days. Life upon this Earth is Miſery. The very Neceſſities to which our Body is ſubject here, are matter of Affliction to a Saint. *Lord*, ſaid the Royal Prophet, *deliver me from my Neceſſities!* They are wretched who do not know themſelves for ſuch, and yet they are more wretched who know their Miſery and do not hate the Corruption of the Age. What Fools are Men to ingage themſelves to Earthly Things! They will be undeceived one Day, and will know but too late how much they have been to blame in loving ſuch falſe Good. Perſons truly Pious are not thus miſtaken, they are diſengaged from all ſenſual Pleaſures, and raiſe their Deſires to Heaven. Begin, *Heloiſe*, put your Deſign in Execution without delay; you have yet time enough to work out your Salvation. Love Chriſt, and deſpiſe your ſelf for his ſake. He wou'd poſſeſs your Heart, and be the ſole Object of your Sighs and Tears; ſeek for no Comfort but in him. If you do not free your ſelf from me, you will fall with me; but if you quit me, and give up your ſelf to him, you will be ſted-

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fast and immovable. If you force the Lord to forsake you, you will fall into Distress; but if you be ever faithful to him, you will be always in Joy. *Magdalen* wept, as thinking the Lord had forsaken her; but *Martha* said, See the Lord calls you: Be diligent in your Duty, and obey faithfully the Motions of his Grace, and Jesus will remain always with you.

Attend, *Heloise*, to some Instructions I have to give you: You are at the Head of a Society, and you know there is this difference between those who lead a private Life, and such as are charged with the Conduct of others; that the first need only labour for their own Sanctification, and in acquitting themselves of their Duties are not obliged to practise all the Virtues in such an apparent manner; whereas they who have the Conduct of others entrusted to them, ought by their Example to engage them to do all the good they are capable of in their condition. I beseech you to attend to this Truth, and so to follow it, as that your whole Life may be a perfect Model of that of a religious Recluse.

God who heartily desires our Salvation, hath made all the Means of it easie to us. In the *Old Testament* he hath written in the Tables.

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Tables of the Law what he requires of us, that we might not be bewilder'd in ſeeking after his Will. In the *New Teſtament* he hath written that Law of Grace in our Hearts, to the intent that it might be always preſent with us; and knowing the Weakneſs and Incapacity of our Nature, he hath given us Grace to perform his Will; and as this were not enough, he hath at all times, in all States of the Church, raiſed up Men, who by their exemplary Life might excite others to their Duty. To effect this, he hath choſen Perſons of every Age, Sex, and Condition. Strive now to unite in your ſelf all thoſe Virtues which have been ſcatter'd in theſe different States. Have the Purity of Virgins, the Auſterity of Anchorites, the Zeal of Paſtors and Biſhops, and the Conſtancy of Martyrs. Be exact in the courſe of your whole Life to fulfil the Duties of a holy and enlightned Superior, and then Death, which is commonly conſidered as terrible, will appear agreeable to you.

The Death of his Saints, ſays the Prophet, *is precious in ſight of the Lord.* Not is it difficult to comprehend why their Death ſhould have this Advantage over that of Sinners. I have remarked three things which

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which might have given the Prophet an occaſion of ſpeaking thus. Firſt, their Reſignation to the Will of God. Secondly, the continuation of their good Works. And laſtly, the Triumph they gain over the Devil.

A Saint who has accuſtomed himſelf to ſubmit to the Will of God, yields to Death without reluctance. He waits with Joy (ſays St. *Gregory*) for the Judge who is to Reward him, he fears not to quit this miſerable mortal Life, in order to begin an Immortal happy one. It is not ſo with the Sinner, ſays the ſame Father; he fears, and with Reaſon, he trembles at the approach of the leaſt Sickneſs; Death is terrible to him, becauſe he cannot bear the Preſence of an offended Judge, and having ſo often abuſed the Grace of God, he ſees no way to avoid the Puniſhment due to his Sins.

The Saints have beſides this Advantage over Sinners, that having made Works of Piety familiar to them during their Life, they exerciſe them without trouble, and having gain'd new Strength againſt the Devil every time they overcame him, they will find themſelves in a condition at the hour of Death to obtain that Victory over him,

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him, on which depends all Eternity, and the bleſſed Union of their Souls with their Creator.

I hope, *Heloiſe*, that after having deplored the Irregularities of your paſt Life, you will die (as the Prophet pray'd) the Death of the Righteous. Ah how few are there who make their End after this manner? And why? It is becauſe there are ſo few who love the Croſs of Chriſt. Every one would be ſaved, but few will uſe thoſe means which Religion preſcribes: And yet we can be ſaved by nothing but the Croſs, why then do we refuſe to bear it? Hath not our Saviour born it before us, and died for us, to the end that we might alſo bear it, and deſire to die alſo? All the Saints have been afflicted, and our Saviour himſelf did not paſs one hour of his Life without ſome Sorrow. Hope not therefore to be exempted from Sufferings. The Croſs, *Heloiſe*, is always at hand, but take care that you do not bear it with Regret, for by ſo doing you will make it more heavy, and you will be oppreſs'd by it unprofitably. On the contrary, if you bear it with Affection and Courage, all your Sufferings will create in you a holy Confidence, whereby you will find Comfort in God. Hear our Saviour, who

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says, My Child renounce your self, *take up your Cross and follow me.* Oh *Heloise!* do you doubt? Is not your Soul ravish'd at so saving a Command? Are you deaf to his Voice? Are you insensible to Words so full of kindness? Beware, *Heloise*, of refusing a Husband who demands you, and is more to be fear'd, if you slight his Affection, than any profane Lover. Provok'd at your Contempt and Ingratitude, he will turn his Love into Anger, and make you feel his Vengeance. How will you sustain his Presence when you shall stand before his Tribunal? He will reproach you for having despised his Grace; he will represent to you his Sufferings for you. What Answer can you make? He will then be implacable. He will say to you, Go proud Creature, dwell in everlasting Flames: I separated you from the World to purifie you in Solitude, and you did not second my Design. I endeavoured to save you, and you took Pains to destroy your self: Go, Wretch, and take the Portion of Reprobates.

Oh, *Heloise*, prevent these terrible words, and avoid by a Holy course the Punishment prepared for Sinners. I dare not give you a description of those dreadful Torments which are the Consequences of a Life of Guilt.

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Guilt. I am filled with Horror, when they offer themselves to my Imagination: And yet, *Heloise*, I can conceive nothing which can reach the Tortures of the damned; the Fire which we see upon Earth, is but the Shadow of that which burns them; and without enumerating their endless Pains, the loss of God which they feel increases all their Torments. Can any One sin who is perswaded of this? My God! Can we dare to offend thee? Tho' the Riches of thy Mercy could not engage us to love thee, the dread of being thrown into such an Abyss of Misery should restrain us from doing any thing which might displease Thee!

I question not, *Heloise*, but you will hereafter apply your self in good earnest to the business of your Salvation: This ought to be your whole Concern. Banish me therefore for ever from your Heart; 'tis the best Advice I can give you: For the remembrance of a Person we have loved criminally cannot but be hurtful, whatever Advances we may have made in the Ways of Virtue. When you have extirpated your unhappy Inclination towards me, the Practice of every Virtue will become easie; and when at last your Life is conformable to

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that of Chriſt, Death will be deſirable to you. Your Soul will joyfully leave this Body, and direct its flight to Heaven. Then you will appear with confidence before your Saviour: You will not read Characters of your Reprobation written in the Book of Life; but you will hear your Saviour ſay, Come, partake of my Glory, and enjoy the eternal Reward I have appointed for thoſe Virtues you have practiſed.

Farewel, *Heloiſe*. This is the laſt Advice of your dear *Abelard*; this laſt time, let me perſwade you to follow the Holy Rules of the Goſpel. Heaven grant that your Heart, once ſo ſenſible of my Love, may now yield to be directed by my Zeal! May the Idea of your loving *Abelard*, always preſent to your Mind, be now chang'd into the Image of *Abelard*, truly Penitent; and may you ſhed as many Tears for your Salvation, as you have done during the Courſe of our Misfortunes!

FINIS.

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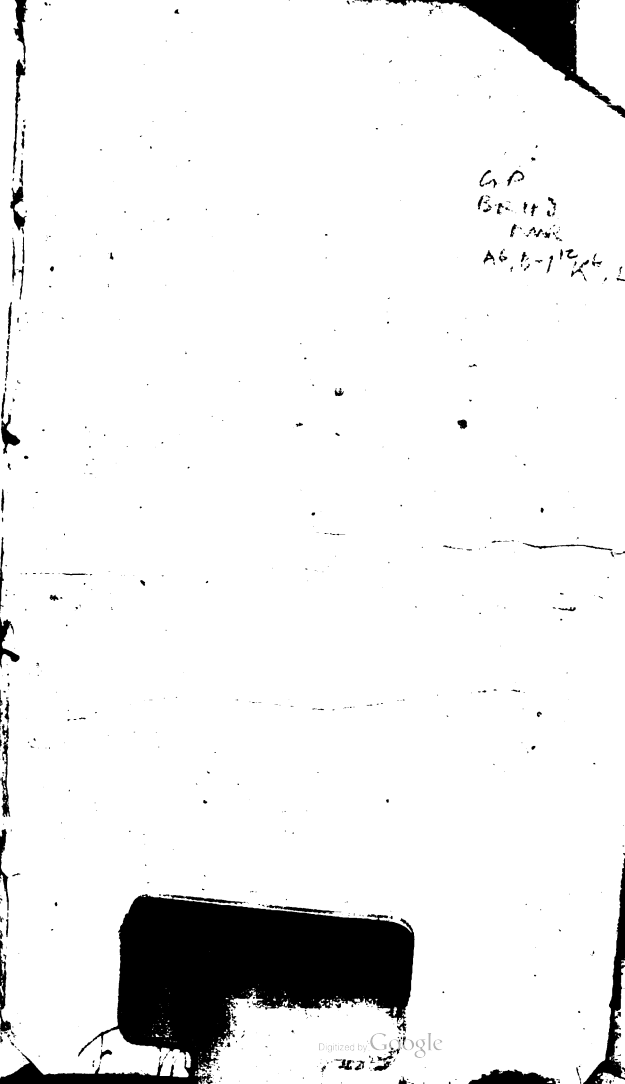

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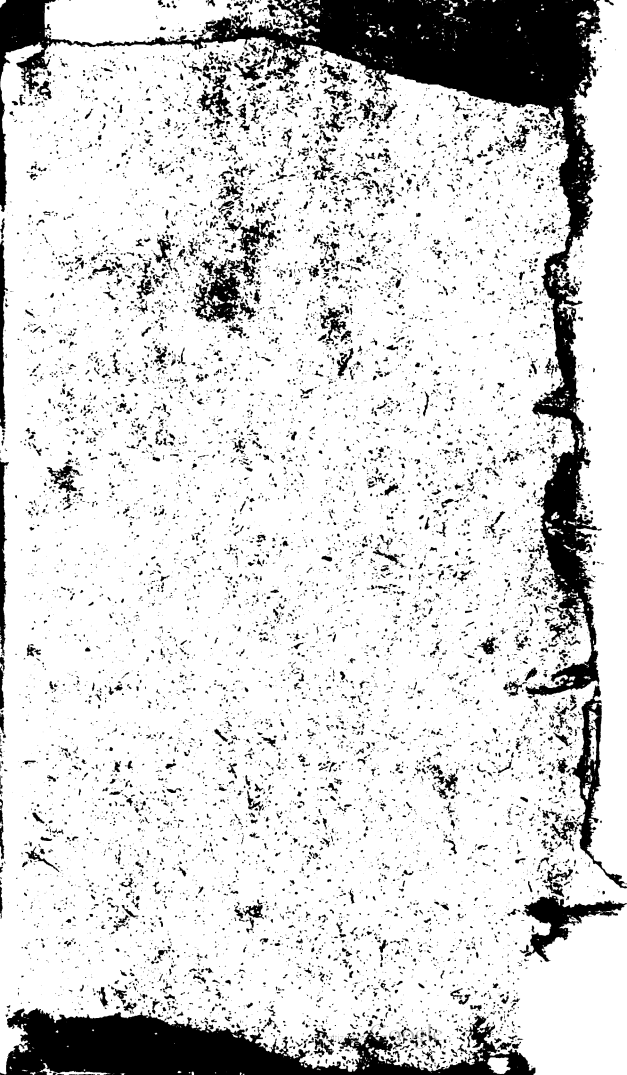

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